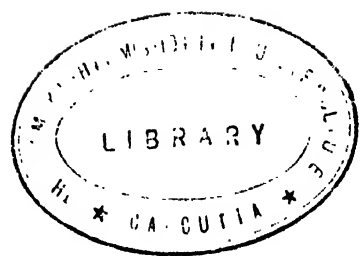


29162



THE HERO OF HINDUSTAN

- MUSSOLINI'S GUEST
- AT HITLER'S BERCHTESGADEN
- HEART OF HINDUISM
- UNDER THE STAR-LIT BERLIN SKIES
- BEFORE THE SUBMARINE LEFT

ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM



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CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE
DEDICATION	v
A WORD TO THE READER	vii
 CHAPTER I. MUSSOLINI'S GUEST	
1. Three Indians	1
2. An Italian Philosopher	2
3. An Italian Belle	6
4. Appointment	7
5. At the Tre Fontane	8
6. Symposium at Iqbal Siddique's	15
7. Tetepathic Love-Waves	25
8. Platonic Love	28
9. With Subhas at the Exelcior Hotel, Rome	32
10. Brahmacharya	37
11. Subhas-Mussolini Interview	51
12. Wedlocked in the moonlight	44
 CHAPTER II. AT HITLER'S BERCHTESGADEN	
13. Poets in an Abbey Orchard	52
14. Mahatma Gandhi	52
15. Unity	55
16. Subhas in a Monastery	57
17. Maya and Satya (Appearance and Reality)	61
18. Religion and Politics	66
19. Problems Awaiting Solution	67
20. Role of Christianity in India	70
21. All Religions Basically One	71
22. Subhas bidding good-bye to the Rev. Webber	76
 CHAPTER III. HEART OF HINDUISM	
23. Parliament of Religions	78
24. The Laws of Religious Evolution	79

SUBJECT	PAGE
25. The Vedanta is a Nutshell	82
26. Hinduism-A Psychological Religion	88
27. Creator and Creation	91
28. Lessons from Philosophy of History	99
29. Hinduism the Mother of Religions	103
30. Thoughts	105
31. Thus Spoke Subhas Chandra	107

CHAPTER IV. UNDER THE STAR-LIT BERLIN SKIES

32. Lilley Marlen	109
33. Two Factory Girls	111
34. Subhas' Correspondence	113
35. Guidance to an Indian Youth	114
36. Subhas with Hitler	119
37. A New Magdalen	124
38. A Star in God's Firmament	132
39. At the Last Party	134
40. Truth, Goodness and Beauty	137

CHAPTER V. BEFORE THE SUBMARINE LEFT

41. Soliloquies	144
42. Confidential Talks	146
43. Socialist Gospel	147
44. The planes flew and the Submarine sank	151
INDEX	153

DEDICATION

To you, O noble son of India, great hero of Hindustan, Azad Hind Fauj ka Netaji, Subhas Chandra Bose, to you I owe a debt, an unredeemed promise. Do you remember our talk on that breezy evening, when the sun was gently setting behind the red veils of the Italian skies, by the smiling waters of the river Tiber, in that eternal city of Rome, when I told you : 'I will sing a song worthy of you in better times, when I am back to the outstretched arms of my immortal Motherland' ? The hour is come for me to sing that song and present you as an ideal to the sons and daughters of Hindustan, to the youth of Aryavārtha in particular, to the blooming millions of this ancient land, the object of adoration and love for both you and me. Whether you are still in this planet or not I do not know ; but I do know that you cannot die. You have gone beyond the jaws of Death. Death has no power over you ; you, my friend and comrade, you, worthy son and soldier of Bharatvarsha.

Your laurels will never fade. Your name and your memory will be always on the increase. To your everlasting memory, to the Youth of India, for the political and economic freedom of our country, for the dawn of a world-culture and world-citizenship, the following pages are dutifully dedicated.

A WORD TO THE READER

This book does not claim to be a hundred per cent historical document. I might say that Subhas and I have jointly produced this book, so that whatever the reader thinks is not of Subhas, that belongs to me, and whatever is not mine, that belongs to Subhas. I have tried to put flesh and blood, poetry and music, to some skeleton reports on the dialogues and activities of Subhas Chandra Bose in Italy and Germany during world war No. II. Psychology, religious philosophy and philosophy of history are brought in to create, as it were, a St. John's Gospel out of the synoptics, that will enable the reader to glimpse into that divine romanticism, that romantic idealism, that idealist poetry and music of life, so badly needed for the youth of either sex, in India, England, America, everywhere, to face the hard realities of life and forge ahead on the path of creative enterprise and fulfilment of their mission in life.

The dialogues and anecdotes contained in this book, I think, have greater historicity than the dialogues of Plato or many plays of William Shakespeare. Not merely moral earnestness, but inspiring of the Indian youth with the same passionate longing for the political, economic and national freedom of India, for the unity of her cultures, religions and races,—of which the living embodiments are men like Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose,—was the main *raison d'être* for me to write this book.

Perhaps the book may contribute the widow's mite in the national resurrection of India, the common Motherland of Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Parsees, Jains and all, even if she were to be vivisected into and relabelled Hindustan and Pakistan.

In the third chapter on the "Heart of Hinduism", the reader may notice a gap. The catholicity of the book would have demanded, and one would have rightly expected, that in the "Miniature Parliament" of Religions", all the great historical religions were duly dealt with. As a matter of fact, the manuscript contained separate chapters on Islam, Christianity and Buddhism, which, however reluctantly, were to be left out, lest the book become too costly for the common man, for whom is this book primarily intended. But

I have endeavoured to depict the scenes in such a way that both a university professor, a historian, a philosopher, and a theologian, as well as an adolescent love-intoxicated college student, can find food for his or her mind in this book.

When I last met the late Senator Giovanni Gentile, at the Oriental Institute, Via Merulana, Rome, he had requested me to write a "play" on Subhas Chandra, and give it as a gift to the Indian Theatre and Film producers. I am afraid, the book may have to be rewritten in Hindustani, India's *lingua franca*, and with more creative imagination, to suit theatrical purposes.

I would have very much liked this baby of mine come out to the sunshine with Bapuji's blessings. But when I last met him at Sodepur Ashram on 11th May, I found him so much absorbed in the final transfer of power, Hindu-Moslem unity, Constituent Assembly and other most vital problems of the day, that I felt it was not fair on my part to insist on to secure a foreword from him. The wounded self-respect is now healed by the determination not to humiliate myself any more by requesting lesser lights than Gandhiji to write a foreword for me.

The usual acknowledgements are not needed for this book, because the revising of the manuscript and the correcting of all the proofs were done with my own hands during the last three months. The fact that the same hands had to wash my clothes and cook my food, earn my bread and butter, and get engaged in some social-welfare, religious-unity and political-freedom work, cannot, however, justify nor whitewash those misprints and mistakes an attentive reader may come across in the following pages. None is more conscious of them than I am. But now I can not add a corrigenda at the end. Should the reader detect any slip, I alone should be the scapegoat, and not the Indian Publication, which, the Statesman of Calcutta on 4th May 1947, while reviewing a book on Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali, said, was "disgraced".

210/6, Cornwallis Street,
Calcutta.
20th May 1947

Anthony Elenjimmittam



Subhas Chandra Bose the Hero of Hindustan

THE HERO OF HINDUSTAN

CHAPTER I

MUSSOLINI'S GUEST

THREE INDIANS

The spring song was in the air. First daffodils were seen to blossom on every hill, in every valley, of the majestic Italian peninsula. In that great and ancient land of Italy, which once laid the foundation of and built up the greatest and the most far-flung empire known to history, in that Italy which, wedded to Greek Philosophy and Jewish Prophecy, still forms the rock-bottom of the western civilisation, there was heard a song which thrilled every youth, men and women, citizens and visitors alike, the loud song of Fascism.

At the time of our arrival in Italy, the Fascist choir was interrupted by a pathetic sigh which ran deep in every heart, in every thinking citizen of the Mussolinian State. The face of many top-ranking Fascist leaders had grown pale. They declared war on the Allies hoping that Britain could be beaten as quickly as a lightning flash. The fall of France intensified their greed, and their vain dream of dividing up the world between Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and Militarist Japan, dug out their own graves.

We went straight to Rome, that proud capital of Cæsars and Popes, of Fascism and Catholicism. Skylarks were seen hovering overhead as we motored down to the Piazza Venezia where Mussolini used to give *darsans* to his Roman and Italian worshippers. There the Dictator of Fascist Italy and the Founder of the Ethiopian Empire, used to deliver his orations, as Tullius Cicero once used to do at the *Forum Romanum*. Facing towards the Palazzo Venezia, on the left hand side, stood that mighty marble monument erected to commemorate the name of King Vittore Emmanuele II, the Father of resurrected and unified Italy.

After a hurried visit to the ancient ruins of Imperial Rome, the Catacombs, the Vatican city, the papal buildings, museums and the Vatican gardens, we arrived at the Monte Pincio. From there one can see the vast expanse of modern Rome with her

suburbs, the tall cathedral domes, and the slowly winding Tiber below. On that day hundreds were seen spending the evening time basking under the refreshing beams of the setting sun. Children, with gay and smiling faces, were seen running and playing about. Here and there, under the trees and behind the bushes, in some corners and on the sloping ground, on the green grass and by the flower gardens, were seen young couples, sporting, courting, flirting, fully absorbed in love, forgetful of the external world. Birds were chirping and flying about merrily and the ecstasy of the Spring was in their songs too. Nature had called us there, we three Indian pilgrims, there to be inspired, enthralled and taught.

Many friars and seminarists were meandering along the road. Convent girls and nuns were also out on that day for their evening stroll. We sat on a bench under a shady birch tree resting for a while and conversing among ourselves. At a distance Fascist *Bersaglieri* soldiers were marching. Long convoys with strong military escorts were also passing along the road down below. Both Machine and Nature were there to excite our imagination, to impress and mould our receptive minds.

AN ITALIAN PHILOSOPHER

After a few minutes, we saw across the lawn, a tall, middle-aged gentleman coming towards us. He was apparently absorbed in thought, pondering over some serious problems of life. His philosophical gait and his broad forefront, wrinkled before his time, impressed us overmuch. Although a man of thought, he had neither a beard nor a philosopher's robe. In his right hand he had a walking stick and an overcoat hanging over his left shoulder.

Nearing us, with a gentle smile, he asked : Are you Indians ? Excuse me for the interruption.

"Yes we are", replied Bharat Mata Das, one among the trinity seated on the throne at the Monte Pincio.

"Oh how lucky I am to meet you", said the stranger smilingly. He approached nearer us saying : "Do you mind me asking you something concerning India and her leaders ?"

"No, not at all. Do come and sit down with us, and let's talk", said Sanjiva Rao, the second person of the Indian *trimurti*.

He sat on another bench just opposite to us, and, after placing his overcoat, hat and walking stick down, began :

What think ye about Subhas Chandra Bose, now Duce's guest ?

Your honest opinion I long to hear, which I value most,
For, various are opinions regarding him in the air afloat.
Reuters say that Bose challenged the British and Gandhi both,
And fled for life to Axis countries, escaping justice and

British wrath.

But to that tune my heart does not dance—nay it revolts
Against such calumny. For think ye that he is one who moulds
His mind, heart, himself, to such a wanton cowardice ?
No, I reckon Subhas Bose foremost in India's political race.
Practical he is, steadfast, courageous and brave,
From all political bondage India for ever to save.
When I interviewed him last at Exelcior Hotel, Rome,
He impressed me much. "Never shall you see me return
home,"

Bose assured, "ere India's independence is won and seen
Is the Congress flag at the top of the Viceroy's lodge—I mean—
Until the last British Tomy is driven out of our land,
And is India made free, and is created a new Fatherland."
Bose will ever remain great and his laurels will never fall,
And I think....."

Sanjiva Rao grew impatient and interrupted him asking :
So, do you know Subbhas Chandra Bose ? Do you mean to say
that now he is in Italy and is the distinguished guest of Mussolini ?
O how cheering !

The stranger : Yes, twice I met Subbhas Chandra. His
calm and confident words, his ideals and heroic deeds impressed
me. When I first met him at Tiergarten, Berlin, I had the great-
est pleasure and privilege to know him closely. A great son of
India he is.....

Sanjiva Rao, quite impatiently : Do please tell us. Is
Subbhas Chandra in Rome now ? Is he Mussolini's guest?

The stranger : Yes, he is now in Rome. Yesterday at
Giuseppe Tucci's house off the Piazza Fiume there was a dinner
party and there I had the pleasure of meeting Bose once again.
He is staying at the Exelcior Hotel and Mussolini is extremely
happy to receive him as his special guest.

"Oh ! then, we should go and see him", said Bharata Mata
Das (B. M. Das), with excited eyes and smiling face, to his friends.

"But how to interview him"? muttered in a low voice Abdul
Kalam Latif who was sitting in the middle,

The stranger : Don't worry. If you are so anxious to meet Subbhas, I can arrange it for you.

"Oh ! could you ? How grand !" said Latif.

The three Indian comrades kept silence for a while. The stranger looking at the water-clock by the side of the lake, in which swans and ducks were swimming merrily, said : "Is it six o'clock ? I must hurry and get back to my house ; because I expect two young Germans and a Swiss artist by 6. 30. today. Now, how about meeting once again ?"

"When ? Where ? And what about interviewing Subbhas Chandra ?" asked Sanjiva Rao.

The stranger looking down in a thoughtful mood said : Well, I have hit upon a plan. The day after tomorrow at 4 pm. Mr. Iqbal Siddique, an interesting friend of mine, and an Indian exile for the last twenty five years, has invited me to a tea party where Subbhas Chandra is also expected to come. What about joining us there ?

Latif : We would. But can we join the party uninvited ?

The stranger : Well, I can phone up Iqbal and inform him that I am bringing with me three Indian friends. I feel certain that, even if I do not inform him beforehand, he will not mind in the least if you also come along with me to the party. On the contrary, he would be only all too glad to see and receive three of his compatriots, I assure you.

Das : You'd better ring him up and let us know what he says. Our telephone number is 560987. Certainly you will be able to get us on the phone between 6 and 8 a.m. or between 7 and 9 p.m. tomorrow.

The stranger : "Yes, I will let you know by tomorrow". He then took his overcoat, hat and stick and got up.

Latif said to Rao in a very low voice : But we did not ask his name.

The three Indians also got up. Latif : Well, sir, you have been extremely kind to us and we are happy to know you. By the way, what's your name ? We have been talking all the time without knowing each other's name.

The stranger : My name is Antonio Micozzi. I am from Arrezzo, central Tuscany. But I have been living and working in Rome for the last fifteen years. I live at 30, Via Milano, near the terminus. I am also very glad, indeed, to have met you this evening and got to know you. Your name please ?

Latif : "This is Sanjiva Rao from Maylapore, Madras," pointing towards the one on the right. "He has lived in Europe for the last seven years and he is now unable to return to India because of his radical political views." Pointing to his friend on the left : "This is Bharata Mata Das, from the United Provinces. He was in Russia when the war broke out in 1939. He is a militant Communist, and being a deadly opponent to the British rule in India, he is also in the same boat, a practical exile. Well, I am from Lahore. I was in Paris studying Letters from 1936 to '39. Then I went to Spain and Portugal. For one year I toured about in the Scandinavian countries. Now I am stranded in this beautiful country of yours."

Miccozzi : Oh ! How interesting ! You should tell me more about yourselves when we meet next time. Human life is pregnant with Beauty, Love and Bliss, because Life is either God or His manifestation. As your Upanishads say : "*Satyam, Jnanan, Anandam, Brahma.*"

Das : Do you know the Upanishads ? And Sanskrit ?
Miccozzi : Yes, the Upanishads have ever been my unfailing strength and the never-ending inspiration throughout my life. I studied Sanskrit with Formichi, the leading Italian Orientalist today. The Upanishads are the masterpiece of human wisdom and the highest expression of religious realisation. Not in Plato's dialogues, not in the Christian Gospels, not in Jallaludin's Rumi's verses, not even in Buddha's sublime sayings and Plotinus' mystical writings, have I discovered such a wealth of spiritual life, such a depth of vision, and religious realisation as in the Upanishads. The Upanishads are

The richest treasure-house of your God-blest land
Whose soul to know, whose seers to love and understand,
I have always sought. For years long have I gone in search
Of that Noble Truth which will make me free and enrich
My mind and heart. To priests and churches I went.
Disillusioned I returned. They coaxed my mind and sent
Me back empty-handed. Bibles and Corans I studied,
But nowhere such a treasure as my heart needed
I found as in the Upanishads of India.....

Rao : Excuse me, friend. Did'nt you say that at 6. 30 you were expecting somebody in your house and that you should go to meet them ? It is now already 6. 15.

Miccozzi : Thanks very much. Yes, I must hurry up. I

loose myself when I start talking on the sacred lore of India. I must now walk quickly to reach home in time. I can not brook missing appointments. We shall have interesting talks when we meet next time. Cheerio, for the time being.

Rao : Cheerio.

Miccozzi shook hand with his three Indian friends and left.

AN ITALIAN BELLE

We walked down the hill. Just by the side of the fountain in the Piazza Spagna there stood a girl of about twenty years, standing alone, looking at the fountain and the fishes swimming therein. Her hands were laid on the wall, and she was leaning slightly towards the fountain. Her face was seen reflected in the gleaming waters. The light was dim as the black out was in force. In an easy, gentle way, she was singing :

"E tu le stelle, e tu la luna lontana.

Preche Così.....

"And ye stars, and you, distant moon up above,
Why shine ye far away ? Come, come by my side,
Inspire. O descend from there. Tell me words of love.
Come within my soul. Stay not so far away, come inside.
In the battlefield is fallen my adored father.
Disconsolate I am and my mother too. I would rather
Stay all day and night, with ye my stars, with you, my moon,
And return home no more, but stay on, live, in this beatific

SWOON.

The drum of eternity is heard. Oh I see my way.
Now in Thee, Oh Life, death is won. For they say :
'Beyond the reach of death *Brahman* reigns' !
O take me in thy lap, for ever freed, where lies
Ineffable peace, love and bliss.
Oh ye stars, and you distant moon up above..."

We stood at a few yards distance and yet her clear, slow, and melodious voice could be heard. The busy and the distracted crowd hardly heeded her song. Apparently nobody seems to have heard or taken notice of her voice, nor the depths of truth she uttered. Yet, she was the queen of beauty under that star-lit heavenly vault. She was thoughtful, graceful, beautiful.

We approached nearer. But her mind and heart were fully plunged into the unfathomable depths of intuitive truth, in the ocean of love, realised in sorrow, feeling, and intense suffering.

She stood still, watching the movement of the moon and the stars reflected in the sparkling waters of the fountain. She withdrew and, as we approached nearer, she turned back, and got lost in the crowd passing by.

"Shall we ever see her again? Hear her sweet and melodious voice, again? What a philosophy! What calm in her song! In her pose! Who can this daughter of heaven be?" With these and similar thoughts we walked back home. First a known philosopher friend, then an unknown poetess and songstress captivating our hearts!

We reached the hotel in the Piazza Venezia a little after 9 p.m. Thoughtful, nostalgic and tired we retired to our bed-rooms.

APPOINTMENT

At quarter to 8 a.m. the porter came running to the breakfast table saying: Lat—Latifo *al telefono*.

We were twelve on the same table and the lady in the middle whispered to Das: Whom does he want on the phone?

Rao: Eh, Latif, it's you. Hurry up, it is Miccozzi, I think.

Latif: Hallo, Hallo.

Miccozzi: Hallo, I should like to contact Mr. Latif, the Indian gentlemen living in the hotel.

Latif: Speaking.

Miccozzi: Oh! is that you, Latif? This is Miccozzi.

Latif: Oh! how are you, Miccozzi? Good morning. How are you?

Miccozzi: Good morning. Well, I rang up Mr. Siddique and he says he would very much like to meet you. So, won't you come along to Mr. Siddique's tomorrow at 4 p.m.?

Latif: Yes, most delighted.

"Excellent", said Miccozzi.

Latif: Oh! by the way, where shall we meet. Where is the residence of Iqbal Siddique?

Miccozzi: I forgot to tell you that. It's at the Via Tevere 28. You may take NT Bus and get down at the Piazza Fiume. It's only five minutes walk from there.

Latif: All right. So until we meet tomorrow, I say, "cheerio".

Miccozzi: Cheerio.

Latif went back and finished his breakfast. There was a Bavarian gentleman who had come to Rome to spend his honeymoon in Italy. He and his bride, a French girl, fled from Germany because of the Anti-Nazi ideology he then held soon after the advent of Hitler to power. He was persecuted by the Nazis after that famous speech of Dr. Goebbels and Rosenberg delivered against Bolshevism at the Nazi Congress held at Nuremberg from 9th to 14th Sept. 1933. He invited all of us to join him in a trip to Tivoli, Frascati, Castelgandolfo and other environs of Rome. We got in his Ford motor car and visited some of the suburbs of the Eternal City.

AT THE TRE FONTANE

At the Via Appia it was both a new revelation and a new inspiration for us to visit the *Tre Fontane*, where, as tradition says, the great Apostle, St. Paul, was martyred by the Roman sword. B. M. Das, among the visitors was visibly moved as he knelt down before the place where the Apostle fell at the executioner's sword. Das had read and meditated upon all the epistles of St. Paul and felt intensely a spiritual kinship between himself and that first and greatest apostle-theologian of Christianity. We saw him weeping for intensity of emotion as he silently and reverently stood before the altars. Tradition further says that when St. Paul was beheaded, his head hopped thrice, and that at the three spots the head touched three miraculous fountains gushed forth. To this day believers and unbelievers can see those three fountains. Perhaps the fountain of Eternal life ! Three fountains (whence the place is called *tre fontane*) of Truth, Beauty and Goodness ?

Walking underneath the eucalyptus trees arching overhead we heard a host of people singing : *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel...*

"The Lord of Israel be thrice blessed,
Visiting His people, whom He redeemed.
A horn of salvation for us is raised
In the House of His servant, great David.
Giving light unto them who sit in darkness,
For people sitting under the shadow of death ;
Guiding their feet unto the way of peace....."

On asking the guide about the choir, we were informed that the friars were reciting their vespers in the adjoining church. We went in and saw the choir filled with white-robed monks, lined

up, reciting prayers, singing psalms and hymns. Their movements were rhythmic. As Mr. Das and Latif knew Latin very well, they could understand the meaning of everything that was recited in that church.

By the side of the church, there is an extensive plot of land tilled by the Trappist monks. They are self-contained men, each with his little hut, with his own work, meeting and talking a few times among themselves in a year. They set the pattern of self-discipline, disinterested service, and they are the embodiments of sustained labour and prayer-study-work.

We came out of the church and for some time rested under the olive trees on the hillock just behind the Tre Fontane. Cool, refreshing breeze was caressing us. The sky was serene. The sun was brightly shining up above our heads. We had taken luncheon with us and, while eating it, Latif told Rao: What a wonderful day it is! So serene, so grand, so fresh!

Mrs. Behler, the young bride of our German friend said: Wonderful is this place. Here one breathes freely and every breathing in is a fresh draught of divine fragrance. Is'nt it true, darling?

"Yes, dear. What a calm! I remember those days when, as young college students, we used to roam about in the Vienna woods, enraptured by the tender caress of love, inspired by the Tales from the Vienna Woods of Waltz, that eternal musician of poetic romanticism, of romantic poetry."—Replied our German friend. (His name was Behler).

Mr. Das, versed in both western and eastern music, thrilled by the inspiration of the moment, began to tune and sing in Waltz's "Tales from the Vienna Woods":

"This is the blessed spot and these are the Roman hills,
Where we have come from afar to sense these eternal thrills.
Bliss and pangs are not outside us. Within us lie hell
and heaven.

Not in the sky, not in books, nor in temples does shine
That Eternal Light, but within the heart and mind of man.
Love of Nature, blooming beauty of a simple virgin maid,
The smile of children, Creation's charms combined, have said:
"Come, reach and relish me, source of love, bliss and truth".

Nature is alive, whose loving touch, whose fond embrace,
Wakes up the silent lyre, frees our hearts from sorrows, sighs.

Darkness is dispelled. Chaos is no more. O how grand
Is that vision which unveils our distant and far-off Fatherland !
No death is there. No decline in love. Sun shines not there,
Nor moon, but Blissful Love and Beatific Vision growing more.
This is the blessed spot, and these are the Roman hills,
Where....."

After Das had finished his song, Latif, with a deep sigh said :
"And ye stars and you, distant moon up above, why shine ye far
away....." Do you remember ?

"Yes, we do", replied Rao and Das, in one voice.

"How graceful, how sweet, how charming was she ! Like a
descended nymph she stood by the side of the fountain, with her
long curly hair and beaming eyes, looking at the swift-moving
fountain, singing !" — Said Mr. Rao.

Mrs. Behler, overhearing him, said to her husband : He is
yearning for his sweetheart. Do you remember those bundles of
letters you wrote to me after our first meeting ? Love is indeed the
eternal song of Creation !

Mr. Behler : Yes, love is the eternal music of Creation. If
this beautiful Nature is so charming and amiable, how much more
do you think will be Beauty itself ? That Beauty must be Love
itself. Hence St. John's Gospel says : "God is Love". In the
Upanishads of these Indian friends it is written : "From Love do
all these creatures proceed, in Love they continue to live and unto
Love they enter in the end". The source of all this love must be
God or *Brahman*. Here again the Upanishads say : "That from
which these creatures proceed"—No—. English translation kills
the beauty of that celestial language, that noble Sanskrit. Do you
want to hear it in the original Sanskrit ?

Mrs. Behler : Yes, I do. I can understand a little bit of
Sanskrit which I learnt when I was a student in Paris.

Behler : *Yato va imāni bhūtāni jāyanthe, yena jātāni jīvanti,
yat prayantyabhisamvishanti, yad vijignasva, yad brahma*—That
from which are all these creatures born, through which, being
(once) born, they (continue to) live, and that to which at the end
they all return, ardently try to know Him. He is Brahman.

Das and Latif : Do you also know Sanskrit ? Yesterday we
met an Italian gentleman who knew Sanskrit.

Mr. Behler : Why ? Almost all students of Philosophy and
Religion in every European university do study Sanskrit, which is
the mother of all the Indo-European languages. Yes, I love Sanskrit.

perhaps more than my own mother tongue, because for the right understanding of the German language a fair amount of knowledge of Sanskrit is necessary. I believe in the saying of Max Müller : "One who knows only one language knows none." Similarly, I would say, "one who knows but one religion knows none."

Das : Quite. In fact, Max Müller endorses the assumption that language and religion go hand in hand, the one inseparably wedded to the other.

Mrs. Behler : I remember how much controversy was aroused when the Senator Giovanni Gentile asserted before the members of the Writers and Artists Club in Rome that, when the Vedanta and Yoga and the quintessentials of Buddhism are really unearthed and presented to the Western world, the hold of the Church over the people may be completely lost. Not only Gentile but many other thinking brains, they who have studied oriental religions and systems of oriental philosophy, do uphold such a view today.

Mr. Behler : After all, Philosophy and Religion have originated in the East. The sun rises in the East. The West is the setting place for that divine sun. But Science, Machine and Industry have their birth place in the West. Will they set in the East ?

Latif : If other Asiatic nations were to follow Japan's lead, the East can never be the setting place for Science and Industry. No, I, for one, can hardly bear with the idea that the East could be the burial ground for the West. No, Science and Industry we should learn from the West, enhance it, and integrate it with our own religious and philosophical heritage.

Das : As if Philosophy and Religion are the monopoly of the East and the East alone. I believe that the ancient Roman Stoics, Latin poets like Virgil and Ovid, Western orators like Cicero and Demosthenes, reformers like Luther and Wyclif, Rousseau, Marx, and a hundred others, were all great prophets, and will continue to be the leading stars of Humanity. I shudder at the very idea of dividing up the world into East and West, into philosophical compartments and industrial brains. We need both, the one integrated with the other. All my experiences, whether in the East or in the West, bring me to the conclusion that mankind is one, and that human nature, whatever be our race, creed or colour, is basically one. I stand on this eternal rock of oneness of Humanity, oneness of human citizenship on this planet, or oneness of human culture, and unity of human civilisation.

Mrs. Behler : I fully agree with what you say, Mr. Das. I have been thinking along those lines for the last five years or so. I feel that time is over-ripe for preaching, defending and fighting out this great truth of one humanity, one citizenship, one culture, one brotherhood of all human beings underneath the sun.

Mr. Behler : I too. It is better for us to eliminate at one stroke all walls between man and man, between the East and the West, and bring all races and nations together under one sky, inhabiting one common Mother Earth.

Latif : So, indeed ! Although you are a German, I am a Punjabi, he (pointing towards Rao) a Madrassi, is there any barrier between us when we talk, love and commune together in a friendly way ? No. Similarly, this possibility could be extended to the whole country, and to the whole world. Could'nt we ?

Rao : Such a unity will be badly needed, when we recall to mind the ideal of unifying and pacifying the world on a sure and solid foundation. These wars and conflicts will continue as long as the artificial walls are allowed to remain. We must break and shatter them, once for all, one by one, all those sectarian and dividing bulwarks which obstruct the path to universality and catholicity in man.

Das : I am a seeker after unity. Today there are various forces at work that struggle in birth-pangs to break open the closed doors, come to the forefront, and bring about world unity, based upon the common citizenship, common culture and common duties and obligations of all human beings, possibly, under a World Government. All the existing nations should be unified under one sceptre, as the Roman Empire was unified under Caesar Augustus. *Pax Augustea* is to be reborn in the world and, then, men, unified under one World Government, will stop from killing and predeciously slaughtering each other. Every man and every woman will be protected by Law and Order, to be promulgated and enforced by such a World Government. At the moment, this *homo-homini-lupus* tension between the nations of the world is destroying the very root of humanity within us. But I dream of a World Order when there is to be real freedom, security and brotherhood, to be realised in a World Government, in the great Comity of Nations.

Mrs. Belher : That is a wonderland, a dreamland.

Das : Wonderful. but only a dreamland.

Latif : Utopia.

Das : But we should think out ways and means to make this Utopia a living reality.

Latif, with a smile of indifference : Do you want to get your brains heated with discussions on politics and world-organisation ? Mock not the inspiration of this hour. Look at that clear sky. The moon is dimly seen (pointing towards the west) over there. "And ye stars, and you distant moon up above....."

Das : Yes, I know what poetry is now springing in your heart. Your nostalgia about that Queen of Beauty at the Piazza Spagna is finding an outlet in your face, in your words, in your songs.

Latif : You have diagnosed rightly. My heart feels wounded. You know...You know...

Das : Yes, I know. I read your heart before you speak. Not only your songs, but also your eyes and the whole expression of your face are an index of your mind, of your feelings.

Rao : Come ye Muses, descend, O *Saraswati*, come,
With your songs and rhymes, with all your hosts,
come, welcome !

O let me sing a hymn to the goddess....."

At that instant the siren sounded, warning the people that the British bombers were over the city, which cut off the poetic flow of Rao and the party came back to the earth again.

Mrs. Behler : Siren again ?

Mr. Behler : Yes, Siren warning. O, by the way, what is the time now ?

Rao (looking at his watch) : Twenty past twelve.

Behler : Twenty past twelve ? Don't forget, friends, our programme for the day. We must go to Tivoli and enjoy the Villa D'Este, one of the beauty gardens of Italy and the world.

Latif : Then, to Frascati and drink a few glasses of red wine there. Don't forget.

Mrs. Behler : And to Castelgandolfo, the lake, the papal villa and the surrounding villages too.

Das : pardon me for my untimely intrusion. I suggest we'd better postpone our visits until tomorrow. Firstly, because there is not enough time to see, study and enjoy all those places in one day. Secondly, because at 4 p.m. we have to join another party, where we hope to meet one man who is near and dear to our hearts.

Rao : Why, Das, this hide-and-seek game before our friends ? Tell them plainly that we are going to see Subhas Chandra Bose.

Mrs. Behler : Subhas Chandra Bose ?

Rao : Yes, Subhas Chandra Bose.

Mrs. Behler, turning towards her husband : O darling, I wish we too had met him. I have heard so many wonderful things about him.

Das : I would very much like to take you with us. But—but you know.....

Latif : You know what ? Complete your sentence and don't leave your listeners in the dark. (Turning towards Mrs. Behler) : He means to say that you can not join us as you are not invited.

Mrs. Behler : Yes, I understand, that is what he means. Well.

Mr. Behler : Well, what ? It is too late. Come let's make a move.

All, then, got up and walked down the hillock. Mrs. Behler and Latif ran down the hillock as quickly as a rolling stone, and, while waiting for the others at the foot of the hill, they were whispering into one another's ears how to meet Subhas Chandra Bose.

Mrs. Behler : I have got a plan. Let's drive back home and then let us phone up your friend.

"Grand idea", said Latif with a hearty smile. "I know how to take the Behlers with us to the party this afternoon".

Das : How ?

Latif : Simple. As soon as we return home we should get our friend, Miccozzi, on the phone, and if he assures us that he or Mr. Siddique, our host, has no objection to our taking two more friends, then, we could take them too with us. Could'nt we ?

Das : Yes, we could. But his telephone number ?

Latif : That's easy. We have got his address, and we could get his number from the telephone directory.

On reaching home Mrs. Behler ran up to the porter asking : Where is the telephone directory, please ?

Porter : Over there, on the table.

They rang him up—but unfortunately no reply. There was none in the house—no reply.

"Don't get dismayed, Mrs. Behler," said Latif. "We will get him on the phone after some time. Keep trying".

After ten minutes they tried again—no reply. After half an hour they tried—no reply again. An hour later—no reply.

Mrs. Behler : Now what are we going to do ?

Das : Don't get impatient. Keep trying. Where there is a

will, there is a way, they say. If not today, you will attain your objective tomorrow. Keep trying.

At 3-30 p.m. They rang up for the last time. No reply.

Mr. Behler : Now, darling, don't get dejected. We certainly cannot go uninvited to an unknown party. Be a bit stoical at this moment. Don't let yourself get depressed, dear. Better luck next time.

Mr. Behler, turning to Das : By the way, do you need our car to go to the party ?

Das : Yes, it's better if you could kindly lend us your car.

Rao : but mind, do you know the way ? You don't know the main streets and roads of Rome. I think we'd better catch that NT bus going to the Piazza Fiume, as Signor Miccozzi instructed us.

Das : Quite. Then we'd better catch that bus and reach the destination quickly.

Das : Mrs. Behler, don't be dejected. Better luck next time.

They took NT bus and reached the place at 3-55 p.m.

SYMPOSIUM AT IQUBAL SIDDIQUE'S

A large hall. Oriental carpets on the floor. A radiogram in one corner. A large portrait of Mahatma Gandhi and another one of Pandit Nehru on the wall. To girls in uniform to receive the guests at the door.

From the open windows the clear sky up above could be seen. As we entered the hall, Mr. Miccozzi came hurriedly to us saying : Hello, my friends ! How are you ? May I introduce you to Mr. Siddique ?

Mr. Miccozzi introduced us to Mr. Iqbal Siddique, who in turn introduced us to Subhas Chandra, who was sitting in an arm chair, resting his elbows on a large table in the centre of the room. All the three Indians introduced by Miccozzi saw Subhas for the first time. He looked grave and thoughtful. Now and then his eyes were seen flashing through the glass. He wore a semi-open black overcoat. Certainly, among all the guests present at Iqbal Siddique's flat, one could at once spot out Subhas. His personal appearance gave him prominence. Though grave, and apparently plunged in thought, he looked cheerful. There was dignity and royal majesty around him. In his right hand he held a scroll of papers. Although the party formed parties among themselves, there was evidently an impatient desire in all the guests present there to talk and listen to Subhas Chandra.

At that moment we forgot the entire world and stood for a few minutes, almost hypnotised, at the first impression we got looking at Subhas, the hallowed hero of Hindustan, enthroned in the seat of sacrifice and glory, amidst his admiring friends, both Asiatic and European. There was solemnity, gravity, and a certain majesty in the air, which was produced by that single man, who was considered an outcaste by the British, and even by some of the corner-pillars of the Congress, including Nehru and Gandhiji, at one time, at any rate.

Iqbal came to us and requested us to sit down.

We sat down. There were about thirty five people assembled in that richly decorated hall. There were two German Nazi soldiers, and three Fascists in uniform. There were also Col. Gondo, the Head of the Japanese Military attaché, and Mr. Sujiura, the private secretary to the Japanese Ambassador in Rome. A few minutes after our arrival, the newly-appointed Japanese Ambassador to Vatican also came in.

Giuseppe Tucci arrived half an hour late to the party. The invitees formed groups among themselves, and were discussing various topics. Mr. Das was worried about the Behlers who were left behind. Miccozzi reading it in his face, asked : Hello, Das, why do you look rather worried ? What's the matter ?

Das then told him the whole story about the Behlers how they also would have liked to join in the party, how they tried to ring him up and how they were at last left behind. Miccozzi went up to Iqbal and narrated to him the whole story.

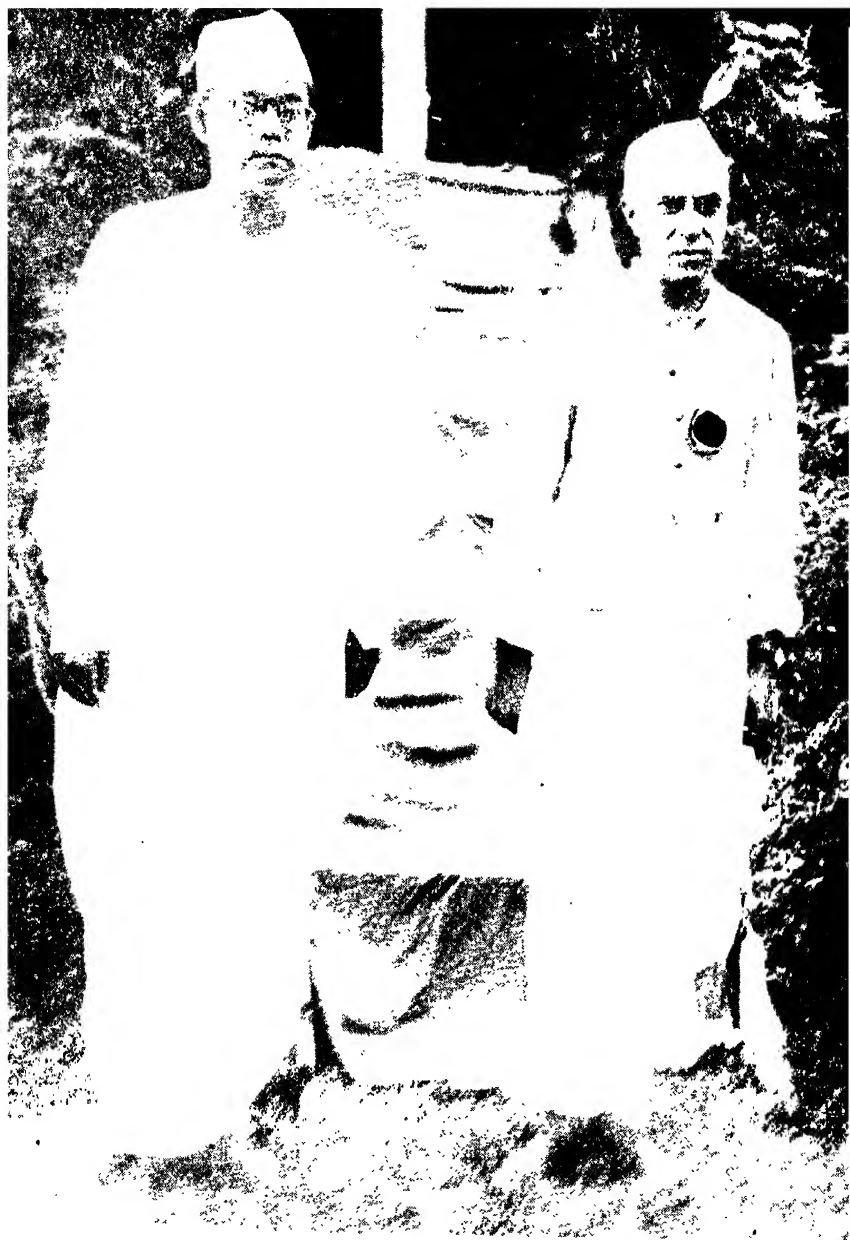
Iqbal : O they could have brought them here with them. There was no need of any previous arrangement. This is just an informal gathering of Indians and friends and sympathisers of India. Now, what could we do to redeem the situation ?

Miccozzi : Well, we could ring them up and, if they are at home, request them to come up and join us at once.

Das ran up to the telephone, got Mrs. Behler on the phone, and within 12 minutes the Behlers arrived at the party, plying the car at the maximum speed through the busy roads and streets of Rome, on that cloudless and cheering evening.

The Behlers were introduced to Miccozzi, Iqbal and Subhas Chandra by Latif.

They all entered in heated discussions and interesting talks on many subjects. We sat quite close to Subhas, because we were more interested to see and study his personality, to talk to him and



Retiring president Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru with the new president Subhas Chandra at Haripuri Congress



listen to his words, than to listen to all sorts of discussions and talks, dealing *de omni re scibili et quibusdam aliis*, which were raging in the hall. Most of their conversations centred around the war, the certainty of Germany's victory over the Allies, the conditions in France, then laid low by the mighty arms of Nazi Germany, and on the happy lot of Italy in the redistribution of the British colonies after the Axis have won the war.

Iqbal Siddique was then the Secretary of the "Friends of India Society", started in Rome towards the end of 1941. Although a Moslem, his wide travels in Europe and Russia had made him really and truly a cosmopolitan. His great passion was to drive out the British and establish Indian independence, enabling all Indians to live in peace and friendliness without any distinction between Hindus and Moslems, of any caste, creed or colour. In this ideal Iqbal found us all birds of the same feather.

Col. Gondo (turning towards and whispering to Subhas) : Did you get my last letter, Mr. Bose ?

Subhas : Yes, I did. I got it in Munich, redirected from Berlin.

Gondo : Since I wrote that letter, I received another cable from General Tojo saying that twenty thousand strong Japanese could now be placed under your disposition, should you decide upon.....

Gondo, winking his eyes, added : I'd better explain it in detail later on.

Subhas : All right. Tomorrow at 11-30 A.M. I will be seeing H.E. the Ambassador at his private residence. If you also could join us, it will help both you and me very much and then we shall discuss all the matters together.

Latif, turning towards Subhas : We are indeed so very happy to meet you, Subhas. All three of us have read your "Indian Struggle" ; we have watched your carrier with interest and love ; we have at heart sided with you even when the towering personalities like Gandhi and Nehru opposed you at the Tripuri Congress Session held in March 1939.

As Latif mentioned the names of Gandhi and Nehru, Subhas, as one suffering from pangs of mixed love and pain, flashed his eyes and slightly shook his body.

Latif continued : We do not ask you many questions. We do not want to tire or overburden you with our intrusion. All that we

looked for was to see you and say, looking straight into your eyes, 'we love you and your ideals'.

Rao : I would like to add one word more. (Then nearing more to Subhas Chandra, in a low voice) We and our material and spiritual resources are at your disposal in your valiant fight for the freedom of our country. We shall be glad to hear your advice and receive your guidance regarding this offer of ours.

Das : But, Sanjiv, this is not the time to discuss all these. (Then turning to Subhas) Do you think we could call at your place, and talk these matters over with you, some time ?

Subhas : I am leaving for Germany within three days. The only time I can think of is at 11-45 A.M. the day after tomorrow. You may come to the Exelcior Hotel and, after the talk, do stay on to lunch with me. Won't you ?

Latif : O that is excellent. Thanks very much, indeed. We will be there.

This appointment was so skillfully arranged that none of the invitees to the party, except Iqbal Siddique and Miccozzi, knew anything about it. Once the private interview was assured all the three Indians looked more gay and happy.

There were two Italian ladies, Mrs. Anna Carducci and Mrs. Pierina Giulietti, the former from Naples, and the latter from Florence, who played buffoons at the party. After drinking the first glass of sweet liquor, Mrs. Carducci got up and began to walk about nodding her head and limbs. She took a second glass and approaching Subhas Chandra, said : This I toast for your health, Mr. Bose, Su-bhas, Su-bhas Chandra Bose.

She then went up to the table and, placing her glass down, began :

Friends from far and near, listen ! Think ye not
 That red wine has intoxicated my brains. No, I am not.
 Let the past funs of mine be gone. O let them go.
 Earnest, clear-sighted I am. Now all of you, listen !
 In that vast subcontinent where mountain peaks rise so high,
 Where many a sage and many a saint have sung the
song of Vedic lore,
 There, where wedding and mixing of races have made
that land well-nigh
 The most cosmopolitan land on earth, growing
such ever more and more.
 There I live, there I long to go and work.

When my mind glimpse into India's cultural past,
 When I begin to read those Upanishads which will last
 For ages to come, O I get enthralled, inspired.
 No words then I utter. My mind is stilled, heart calmed.
 Today, men, women, comrades-in-arms, all of you listen !
 Today, India must be freed from all fetters that fasten
 Her to Britain first, then from every foe, within and without
 That country, which I have loved ever since I have
 known her. But shout
 In vain without sacrificing is of no avail. Hence behold,
 That big estate I own near Bibbienna have I sold
 And have added my widow's mite to the India Freedom Fund.
 My eldest son have I sent to work for the India Society.
 I myself, if so Heaven decree, will go, go ahead.....
 This, then, the call of the hour, both yours and mine.
 O awake, my heart, up my soul, up with the moving time,
 And ye friends here gathered, I request, I beseech, I order
 Myself and you.....

At this point she stopped, as if she lost the trend of thoughts.
 She recovered her spirits and sat on the sofa like one fallen in a
 state of trance.

Tucci, then, rose up and standing nearer the table, said :
 On the Indian political scenes I know not what to say
 As in her political struggles interests have I taken none.
 Three times two have I gone and lived in Hindustan,
 In Tibetan tableland, Burma, Japan and in the Far East.
 Give me back Buddha, Yajnavalkya, Asoka and of old
 Those master-minds of human wisdom. I ask for
 nothing more.

In India my soul breaths, it expands, it grows.
 That, to tell the truth, is my real Motherland.
 Oft with that wonderous seer-poet of modern age,
 That philosopher-prophet, Rabindranath, I've discussed,
 On poetry and other-worldly bliss, while living in that
 blessed land.

There men and women still represent that immortal ideal,
 Which from times immemorial flows in every Indian vein.
 Indian Art, Indian dance, Indian songs, their poetry,
 Are lyrics of ages. The more you know that land
 the more your love her.

O *Bharatvarsa*, deign to unfold to all mankind
 How to win our life and death in *Brahma-Vidyā*,
 Attain freedom from fear, evils and troubles all.
 My life India's spiritual lore to unearth have I given,
 This my gift to India, my sacrifice, before earth and heaven.
 Ye friends, ye fighters for India's right and might,
 Hear ! May the soul-message of India be an everpresent light
 For you to forge ahead ; clear your way, fight,
 And win the palm of life and reach our true Fatherland.
 After this Mr. Behler spoke :
 Indo-Germanic races are one in blood, one in mind,
 Twin sister-nations are Germanien and Hindustan.
 As Rosenberg said : 'The seed of all the Nordic races
 And of Indo-Aryans is one'. To bring about unity
 Between our two countries shall I spend the rest of life.
 Paul Deussen and Goethe dreamt for that unity,
 In culture, thought and life between these two peoples great.
 For a time, suppressed may remain this ideal dream,
 But return it must with ever-renewed insistence
 To the thoughtful few of both the countries.
 Germanien, my country dear, come wed your eastern bride.
 India great, restore your kinship and unity with Germany
 on the western side !

Afterwards Mrs. Behler, Miccozzi and a few others spoke on various subjects. The only man who kept quiet all the time was Subhas, sitting with downcast eyes in a pensive mood. Mrs. Giulietti, then got up, opened her small suit case, used her lip-stick, took out and put on her dancing costume and began to dance. Mr. Siddique opened the wireless set and Waltz dance tunes were in the air.

While dancing she was often looking at Subhas, as if to awaken him from his deep thoughtful mood. But Subhas, although pensive, was aware of everything that was going on in the hall, listening to every word said or uttered by the various speakers on that occasion. Mrs. Giulietti, as if determined to make Subhas laugh during her dance, began to sing, leaving her completely under the sway of the inspiration-wind of the moment.

She sang :

Like Siddharta under the boe-tree, why sittest thou,
 O brave son of India ? Tell us of your land, your own dreams,
 Subhas Chandra, awake, arise and speak.

Men, women, girls and boys, and as many of those
To whom your brave deeds are known and your thoughts,
Throng around you. Now in this hidden place you remain,
But a Leader's heart throbs within your mortal frame.
When in your great country you have gone, remember
The blue sky of Italy. Be cheered by the love,
Understanding and sympathy of those who have known you
and your dear land.

O Subhas, a word we want to hear from you, speak,
But speak from your heart, because WE ALL ARE YOU,
AS YOU ARE THAT—*Tatvamasi*. Subhas, speak, please speak.

Subhas, with a gentle smile : Unless you press me down to some specific point I really do not know what to say. But I fully share the views expressed by many friends here, except in those praises showered upon me. Whatever you think or speak about me, I am nothing but the lowliest of the lowly servants of India. My call came even from my early days, when I was still a student in England. Nationalism fired me and my whole being became a willing holocaust to the cause of freedom for my Motherland. Nothing narrow, nothing sectarian, is here. The same freedom I want for India, I want for England, for Italy, for Germany and all nations under the sun. On returning from England, I went straight to Gandhiji, then in Bombay, at the height of his fame, and I sat at his feet. My mind was free as Gandhij's too. Although in later years there was much difference of opinion between Gandhiji and myself, as regards the course of action to be pursued to achieve India's independence and to make her great, my love and appreciation for Mahatmaji has always been on the increase. Gandhiji is the only man in modern India who, more than any single individual, has brought India nearer her goal. Mahatmaji's personality is so commanding that even Pandit Nehru cannot always be critical about his words. But wherever I am, all that I do, all are done as a humble servant of India, as a blood-brother of, and comrade-in-arms with, my friends and colleagues in India, men like Gandhiji, Nehru, Patel and others.

A young Swiss, who was also among the invitees, asked : Is it true that you were expelled from the Congress and you have, then, formed a small group of your own, called Forward Blockists ? I have read this news in some German and Italian periodicals.

Subhas : I do not know anything about my expulsion from the Congress. But there is a group of men and women centring

around me and they form the Forward Block. We are Socialist Radicals and we do not believe in moderatism nor in the nineteenth century liberalism as men like Tej Bahadur Sapru. We do not believe in non-violence as a mass creed, although it might suit a few thinking individuals. We believe in a strong, powerfully organised and centralised State, which will be born as soon as the British are sent out of India.

Mr. Henrie Benois, once a lecturer in the University of Vienna, who also was with us, asked : Does your ideal of a strongly organised and powerfully centralised State clash with the ideals of modern Democracy ?

Subhas : Totalitarianism, Democracy, Republicanism etc., are but mere names. The existence of a State, its maintenance, its birth and death, are all conditioned by the socio-economic forces that are at work, shaping the course of history and the destiny of Mankind.

Very often, it is a question of quarrelling about words. The British Press today is discrediting the Congress—where the majority of members and leaders are moderates and democrats—as a totalitarian and Fascist organisation. Yet, is there any truth in this charge ? The Indian National Congress has always fought against Fascist and Nazi ideals of totalitarianism. But it is true, we have been more violent in fighting British imperialism and the known evils of that economico-political system. After all, the British propaganda about the imperial designs and “expansionist plans and reducing the world into slavery by the Tripartite Powers”, are all mere talks and speculations about supposed, or at the most, probable evils. We don’t know them. But of the evils of an imperial system we know enough, and they are to be uprooted. Then its other rival, totalitarian economy, also will vanish. Fascist totalitarianism is the brat of Imperialism which Britain for centuries has reared and catered for.

Believe me, there is more totalitarianism in India under the British than under Mussolini in Italy or under Hitler in Germany. In England today, the country that proclaims to be the most democratic in the West, under the stress of war-economy, is as much totalitarian in her efforts to ensure her expected victory in this war as is Germany or Italy.

So, you see, my friend, the same State will be called totalitarian and democratic under different conditions. I am fully convinced that Germany would have been prostrate after Versailles

if a leader like Hitler had not come and re-organised the Reich. The Parliamentary system would not have worked there. They needed a man who, understanding the spirit of their people and the needs of the present age, could reorganise and instil hope and life into the dead bones and silent ashes of a defeated people. There are certain economico-political factors and certain historical conditions which call forth Dictatorship to save a people or a state, to steer a nation along the path of progress and freedom. The ancient Romans understood this and dictators came to save the Empire in times of peril.

In India the more centralised and the more powerfully organised the State is the better will be for us. We need but a few representative Indians who will just do and act dictatorially and with courage. We cannot tolerate—at this moment, at any rate—various parties and factions, communal organisations etc., to block or retard the irresistible march of India towards unity, freedom and progress. No Parliamentary system of the British pattern can function in India, for the time being, at any rate.

Signorina Lucietti, a student from Milan, at that moment, asked Subhas Chandra : Do you mean to say that India will have to be organised on the same model as our Italy, with one single man overlording and dictating everything concerning the State ?

Subhas : Not exactly on the same pattern. We need take into consideration the historical and cultural differences that exist between India and Italy. But the main idea is that of an all-controlling State—totalitarian as they call it—which I envisage for free India, at least for the next ten years.

Tucci : How can the cultural heritage of India be saved, or the creativity of India's religious genius, by introducing the grinding wheels of a mechanised and all-regulating State ?

Subhas : I can see very clearly the great cultural heritage of India. But that should not serve us as a cloak to hide India's helplessness, mass poverty, illiteracy and degradation. Let Religion and Philosophy be set aside for sometime, until we have made human beings out of the walking skeletons in India. Our present-day philosophy and religion should be : food for the hungry, clothes for the naked, homes for the homeless. A decent living first, then comes philosophy. Aristotle, that positivist philosopher of Greece has said : "first live, then philosophize". That is the gospel to modern India, first understood and vehemently proclaimed by Swami Vivekananda. So bread and butter first,

then God and soul—I mean—for the vast majority of Indians today. But a few leisured thinkers and poets and landlords may indulge in talks on Philosophy or Religion.

Anthony Smith, a research student from the Vatican City, who, reading the life and work of C. F. Andrews, took a vow to go to India, and dedicate his life for the cause of India's suffering humanity, then asked Subhas: Do you think that Mahatma Gandhi could play an important role in the post-independence economic and political development of India?

Subhas: Gandhiji is the greatest living soul among the known leaders in contemporary history of not only India, but perhaps of the world. He is essentially a man of faith, of action, of intuition, and stands for values in human life. The more you know his dear personality, the more you will love him. He is a saint and, indeed, he is a *Mahatma*.

But I do not think that his economic theories and the *Charka-Khadi* gospel will have any future in India as a whole, nor will it bear any fruit in post-independence India. Gandhiji has understood that, and he has said that his place after independence will be among the minority. Nehru himself, the devoted follower of Gandhiji in many respects, has said that the *Charka* economics is but for the time being.

I share his opinion very strongly myself. In a world rapidly growing industrialised and mechanised India cannot remain isolated. Our salvation consists not in denying Industry, Science and Machine, the symbols of the Age, but in controlling them and maintaining the supremacy of man over them. In that I think those prophets of modern Bengal, beginning from Rammohun Roy down to Vivekananda and Tagore, are more in line with the spirit of the Age.

Madame Lepicier, from Bordeaux: Do you think that the whole of the Pacifist philosophy of Gandhiji has no future in India? I myself am drawn to the philosophy of Pacifism through the writings of Tolstoy and the life and teachings of Mahatmaji. Do you think, then, that all are going to be brushed aside?

Subhas: My limited studies, experience and reflection, have brought me to the irrevocable conclusion that the gospel of the Cross, which is in fact the Gandhian system of non-violence in its dynamic form, is meant but for a handful who have realised God through self-sacrifice, self-knowledge and self-purification. But that sublime gospel has never been the property of the common

man. I believe in men like Machiavelli and John Baptista Vico, who have laid down the basic and fundamental truths about State, not in its utopian sense as in Thomas More, Plato, and now-a-days in Tolstoy or Gandhi, but in its hard and naked reality.

Rev. Joseph Brown, a professor from the Gregorian University, Rome : Am I right in concluding from what you say, Mr. Bose, that you agree with the assertion that mankind as a whole is irredeemable? That mankind as a whole is fallen, a hopeless victim of what our theologians call, 'original sin'? Do you, then, corroborate the truth of the saying of St. Augustine that the whole mankind is a damned mass—*massa perditionis*—?

Subhas, smilingly : Do not test my theological knowledge, Reverend Sir. But I know that the higher forms of religion and philosophy are not meant for at least 80% of Indians and at least 90% of the rest of mankind. Our wisdom consists in so ordering the State as to serve the real interests of not only a few philosophers and saints here and there, but the security and prosperity of the common man. I do not know anything about what you call 'original sin' except that I read about it in the epistles of St. Paul.

Many other questions followed and Subhas answered them all, briefly, clearly and courageously.

An Indian girl who was sitting in a corner was then requested by Mr. Siddique to entertain the party with some Indian songs and dances. She sang "*Jana-gana mana adhinayaka jayahe bharata bhagya bidhata*", a national song of Tagore, and afterwards she performed some Sautiniketan dances.

It was getting dark, and as the black out was still in force, the invitees one by one began to leave the party. Subhas Chandra and his secretary left at about 6-45 p.m. We got in the car and Mr. Behler drove us back home after an hour's talk with Mr. Miccozzi and Iqbal Siddique. We reached home just before the dinner and then retired to bed reflecting upon the day, on the party, on the personality of Subhas Chandra Bose and the terse, clear-cut answers he gave to those who fired questions at him.

TELEPATHIC LOVE-WAVES

Mr. Latif was so excited about the things seen and heard that he grew restless and sleepless that night. His imagination was too excited and he could not gather his thoughts, nor control all the inner forces raging in a volcanic state within him. Then he tried to pray, but he could not. In the dead of night, he went

up to the terrace, clad in his dressing gown, and stood there alone reflecting, thinking, musing. Being of a poetic temperament and a lover of Nature, the shining stars and the moonlight gave peace, calm and enchantment to his agitated mind.

Seeing the stars, and enjoying the refreshing beams of the sister-moon, shining up above, he began to sing in the same tune as that of the girl they saw at the Piazza Spagna :

"E tu le stelle, e tu la luna lontana.....

And ye stars, and you, distant moon up above,
Why shine ye so far away ? Come, come by my side etc.
Whither are you gone, O sweet little girl ?
Let me be blest by one sight more ? Lull,
Inspire me again, you, the goddess of my heart,
Come, sing me that song which for ever will last.
In this world or in the next, nothing I value more
Than your gentle face, O nymph, come from yonder shore,
And row me back to that blissful land,
Which will be our eternal Fatherland.

E tu le stelle, e tu la luna lontana.....

Tell me, angel dear, where your dwelling is,
A wounded bird I am, no rest is for me, and cease
I will not to return to you with nostalgic heart,
Until I am held in your arms, close, close to you.
You, O darling, my sweetheart, hide not any more,
O come, enfold, embrace ; for my heart is sore
Depressed. Whether I will meet you or not, I know not,
But I will go all my way until I find what I have sought,
You, you, you, my adored Love, my Life, my All.

Telepathy or communication by mental vibrations, is today an established fact among psychologists. On that same night, at that same hour, that girl, still living under her paternal roof in a humble cottage, in a bye-lane off the Via Tritone, by some mysterious touch awoke from her bed and got immersed in soliloquies. Through her window she could see the spring flowers in her garden, lit-up by the moonlight. She began to sing slowly and gently :

This is the night in which your voice I heard,
O God of Heaven and Earth ! By your Beauty lured
Have I seen a sight, heard a voice, enjoyed a vision,
Which will clear my way to fulfil thy call, my mission.

Alone have I trod all my way, thou, my God, art my guide.
Abandon me never, but come and stay on by my side.
To this weakling be thou strength, to this blind, light,
For Thee have I always kept as my all, my life, my sight.
If lonely I should continue and end my life,
O gracious Majesty, may thy will be done ! Strife
And struggle is human existence. But if comradesd,
That is welcome too. Thy will be fulfilled !
Then she sang with John Henry Newman :
Lead, kindly light ! amidst the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on !

The night is dark, and I am far from home
Lead thou me on !

Keep Thou my feet : I do not ask to see
The distant scene,—one step enough for me.
I was not ever thus, nor prayed that thou shouldst
lead me on.

And I loved to choose and see my path ; but now—
Lead thou me on !

I loved the garish day ; and spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will ; remember not past years !
So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on

Ov'r moor and fen, over crag and torrent, till
The night is gone,

And, with the morn, those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

Singing this song she retired and, on her way back to her bed room, she again sang :

Rest, rest, now, my soul, for you have glimpsed the light,
What your heart has been throbbing for is now within
your sight,

Rest, rest my soul, rest.

Your mind is now firmly fixed on to higher things,
Woe and misery are not for you, my dear, but wings,
To soar higher and higher towards the life divine.

Rest, rest my soul, now rest.

She went to bed and s'ept soundly.

Latif also went back to his room and slept soundly. After

breakfast, Latif went to Das and asked : Let's go to the Piazza Spagna for a walk ?

Das : Why to the Piazza Spagna and not to any other place ? Yes, I get it. You expect to find your treasure there again. Remember : 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also'. As logs in the ocean meet for once and may never return, so is our life on this planet. As in a dream you enter the paradise of bliss, where angels and dancers cheer your heart and soul, but all are vanished as soon as you are awake, so is the meeting of sweethearts or *striratnams* on this earth. O how mysterious is human life ! How more mysterious are the paths of Love ! How infinite, how varied, how eternally fresh and refreshing is the voice of Love in human hearts !

Rao also joined Mr. Latif and Das in their morning walk. They first went to visit Castel Sant' Angelo, and while returning through the Piazza Spagna, Latif, with a deep sigh, said : O how the whole world is a vast desert to me today !

Das : I know the reason why. Because you do not hear "*Et tu le stelle.....*" Don't get depressed, dear. Should Heaven decree, you will find your partner all right. Don't worry. God's ways are inscrutable.

PLATONIC LOVE

They returned home. After lunch and siesta they went out again roaming about in the streets and the piazzas of Rome. While strolling along, Latif insisted that they should return home *via* Piazza Spagna. The sun had gone down behind the red veil in the West. The stars and the moon were again keeping watch over the Eternal City, the Piazza Spagna, and over that angel, who was standing again by the side of the fountain, singing melodiously :

None is left in the dark for long, ere thy helping hand
Has shown the way to the wandering pilgrim in this land
Where thorns and thistles grow. O Pilot of my barge,
Steer me straight, enclose me in thy heart, deep and large.

When I too along my father's path have gone,
When this Angiolina is departed and people mourn
Her death, these eternal stars will continue to watch
Thy Creation, still keeping watch over this lonely girl.

Alone shall I tread my way ? Or befriended ?
Shall my heart beat close to another one, sent

From Heaven to help me, to guide my path ?

Silence or answer, I trust and rest in Thee.

Latif on hearing this musical poetry, approached her nearer from the rear, and, in the same tune, began to sing :

No, lonely you shall never be, cheer up, my gentle girl,
God's hand is upon you. Neither yours nor mine is the soul,
But God's. O how I wish...O how I wish I could
Help you in a way that Heaven decrees I should !

Angiolina raised her eyes and looked behind when she saw three Indians and Latif in the middle. She spotted out at once who the songster was. She smiled at Latif and Latif smiled at her. Afterwards she withdrew, as if she felt shy of the three men adoring one and the same angel.

Latif approached her as though to ask her a question. But her virginal purity held him back and she went her way. But Latif was determined to follow her up, at least to know where she lived, and just to say to her, 'hello'.

Das : Do you mean to pursue her, my dear Abdul ?

Latif : Yes, I do. Do please come along with me.

Das : No, I am not coming. I have some work to do at home and, besides, I do not want to make the people say that Indians are chasing after Italian girls.

Latif : Do as you think best. But, for my part, I feel I should see her and just say 'hello'. I certainly am not worthy of that celestial nymph. But I should say to her at least, 'hello sister'.

Rao : You may say 'hello' or whatever you like. I am joining Das and we are going home. You may go wherever you like. Only don't forget that we have to go to the Exelcior Hotel to visit Subhas Chandra Bose.

Das and Rao returned to the hotel. Latif pursued Angiolina. They walked and walked. But Angiolina did not turn back nor suspect even for a moment that Latif was following her. They reached Via Tritone and, as she entered a small bye-lane, Latif thought that her house must be somewhere there. As she opened the door and was about to enter her cottage, Latif hesitatingly said : "Hello, Hello, sister". Angiolina looked back and, seeing Latif all of a sudden, held her breath. She then opened the door, and as she was entering in, Latif said : Just a word—just one word, sister—please...

Angiolina stopped and smilingly asked : Do you want to ask me or tell me anything ?

Latif : Yes. I wanted to say 'hello sister' to you—to you. Do you mind telling me, telling me who you are ?.....

Angiolina smilingly : Answer my question first. Do you believe in God ? What does God mean to you ?

Latif : God is the Reality without which neither you nor I can subsist, the giver of pure love and eternal bliss. God, to me, is the life of my life, the soul of my soul. "Not even a wife, nor a husband is dear so that we may love them, but because we love God, all become dear", as the Chandogya Upanishad says.

Angiolina approached him and said : Say that once more.

Latif : God, I say, is All-in-All

29162

Of all the universe the Over-Soul,
The source and end of everything,
Outside whom we can not love anything.

Not in your graceful smile nor words,
But in His love we move forward.
He the Ancient One, ever-young, ever-fresh,
Who alone can our minds bless, refresh.

In you I see His image, th' Eternal Love,
You I call my sister-love, darling-dove.

In Him is your rest and mine,
Never may we part from this divine sunshine.

Angiolina approached nearer Latif and gently asked him :
Who are you ?

O tell me, tell me, friend, who you are,
Whence you come. My wings are clipped,
Until you deign to tell me who you are,
And I see my way, all hopes fulfilled.

My father, like a hero great
On French soil fell long since. Might
Of mind he sought for, with no mind for might.
O, friend, O brother, won't you tell me ?
Won't you tell me ?.....

Latif told her his life in rhyming verses, and Angiolina narrated hers. Their talks were prolonged for hours, until they heard the clock strike twelve. "O it's midnight," said Latif.

Angiolina : I must get back home. My people at home will be very much worried about me.

Latif : My friends too in the hotel.

In the meanwhile, Das and Rao were spending a sleepless night, as Latif failed to reach home in time. At the house of Angiolina, her mother, uncle and aunty, were likewise restless, as their Angiolina did not return home as usual by 8 P.M. In fact, her uncle came out several times to search for her ; but he missed her by hairbreadth. She and Latif were sitting just behind the dim gas light in the street, behind a tree.

Latif : So, good-bye, Angiolina, until we meet again.

"Good-bye, dear," said Angiolina.

Latif left her. But after two minutes he returned to that place running, as if he had forgotten something behind. Angiolina was still standing there in a thoughtful and almost a prayerful mood.

Latif : Angiolina.

Angiolina : O Back again ? What happened ?

Latif : I forgot to ask you where we should meet next ?

Angiolina : At the piazza Spagna at the same time. There my father used to take me, and there I learnt from him mysterious truths about God and Man. Every time I go there, I feel, I see, I hear my father. He was a devout and saintly Catholic who did not brook any sectarian wall. He was a friend and brother to all.

I go to that fountain at the Piazza Spagna almost every day and spend some time in meditation, prayer and recollection, after which I usually return home strengthened, consoled and enlightened. But on no other day was I so bless't, nor so refreshed and cheered as today when I met you, my friend, dear Abdul, dear soul.

Latif : I should not keep you much longer. Cheerio, dear, until we meet again tomorrow by the fountain.

Angiolina : By the fountain of Grace, Truth and Love.

So they bade each other good-bye and returned to their respective homes.

Both of them spent the rest of the night plunged in the ocean of thought, hope and prayer.

In the morning, Das woke up and saw Latif soundly sleeping in his room. Das later on asked Latif : What, Abdul, you were not indoors until 1 A.M. last night ? Did you meet that girl ? For, then, the whole mystery is explained.

Latif : Yes, I met and talked to her.

Rao : Only talked ?

Latif : No, really I did not do anything more—no I would not kiss her, except perhaps her feet. She is not a match for me.

Mightier in spirit than me is she but a friend and a sister to me she always remains.

WITH SUBHAS AT THE EXELCIOR HOTEL, ROME.

At 11-25 A. M. the three Indians reached the Exelcior Hotel. The porter in uniform came down and asked : Have you come to interview H. E. Subhas Chandra Bose ? Because the names of three Indian gentlemen are on the list of the persons who are to be received at 11-30 A.M. today.

"Yes, we are," said Das. They were taken in.

At that time Subhas was writing a letter. Many files piled upon the table. A copy of the Bhagavad Gita and a New Testament were also seen lying on the table. Three suit cases were seen in one corner of the room. Portraits of Gandhi and Tilak by his book shelf.

Subhas : O are you here ? Do come in.

They entered and placed their overcoats and hats on a bench and sat on the arm chairs around the table.

Rao : We shall try to be very laconic. We do not feel we should steal away much of your precious time.

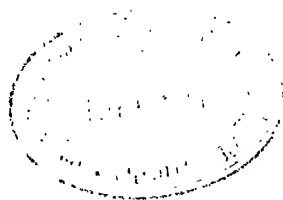
Subhas : O do not mind for me. I am at your service. In whatever way I can help you I shall be only too pleased to do it.

Das : The main purpose of our visit is to know in which way we can be of any service to you, because we heard from Iqbal Siddique that you are organising an Indian National Army which will fight in Asia until the Congress flag is hoisted on the top of the Viceroy's residence and the last British master is either driven out or is made equal with the rest of Indians.

Subhas : Yes, I am organising a free army which will free India. Well, friends, I need not hold back anything from you, because I can read on your face that you are as patriotic and self-sacrificing as any of our national leaders. I will be staying on in Europe until I have completed the programme I had in mind before I left my flat in Elgin Road. Before the war broke out, I went to Sevagram to meet Gandhiji and convince him that some men were needed abroad in order to secure the political independence of our country. He did not share my view that there should be a fighting army outside India whose action should synchronize with the fight from within the country. But he said : 'Look here Subhas, if you really think that that is your call, my blessings are with you.' Whatever might have been the opposition between the Forward Block and the moderate and compromising



Subhas after his last visit to Gandhiji at Sevagram



sections of the National Congress since the Tripuri Session, I have always felt that Gandhiji's blessing was cheering me wherever I went, and in whatever I did, to achieve the common goal, Indian independence, for which my heart, soul and my whole being are consecrated for the last quarter of a century or so.

Rao : But, Subhas, your activities, specially your broadcasts from the Axis countries, are being utilised by the British at home and in India, to prove that you are a Fascist and 100 per cent a Hitlerian. (Cf. Encyclopedia Britannica, suppliment for 1946, the article on Subhas Bose where he is described as a refugee working for the Nazi Propaganda Minister in Germany !).

Subhas : Men are free to say about or interpret me in whatever way they like. But as far as I am concerned, I have nothing to do with German Racialism, Fascist Dictatorship, and Japanese Militarism. I am aware of the British propaganda where they call me a "puppet of the dictators." But, my friends, I must do my duty. I remain a free man wherever I go. Neither the Germans nor the Italians nor the British can buy my soul, nor can I sell my freedom for anything underneath the sun.

My experiences in politics have brought me to certain definite conclusions which, in many details, run diametrically opposed to the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence and passive resistance. I have always seen an unbridgeable chasm between the individual man and the common clay. *Satyagraha* and Gandhism are meant for the thoughtful few. But it can never be a living philosophy for the man-in-the-street for any considerable length of time. Gandhiji, in his wisdom, has admitted more than once his Himalayan errors. Who knows that his failure to see this gulf between the thinking few and the unthinking many is not perhaps the most Himalayan of all his Himalayan errors ?

Ends do not always justify means. But when the alternative is between two evils we have to choose the lesser of the two. I am of the opinion that, inspite of Gandhiji's gospel, Indian independence, both political and economical, both from within and from without, is to be achieved in a baptism of fire, in streams of tears, blood and sweat. There is no rosied path to freedom.

Gandhiji says that he finds support to his non-violence in the Gita. I am a devoted student of that wonderful book. But I fail to read his interpretation there. He says that the New Testament also gave corroboration to his idea of non-violence. I fail to read him there too. For a few texts that could be adduced from the

Sermon on the Mount in favour of non-violence, there are an overwhelming numbers of texts in other parts of the New Testament—not to speak of the Old Testament which also forms part of the Bible—which neutralize and outweigh the passages from the Sermon on the Mount. It is true that Tolstoy's "Kingdom of God is within you" beats unison with Gandhian ideal of non-violence. Interpretation differs from man to man, because the subjective disposition of men is different. A saint, a preacher or a religious teacher, has certainly a different standard for judging and interpreting the Gita from another one who has to tackle with the harder realities of imperial subjugation, militarism and all forces of violence and power marshalled by a foreign government against the interests of one's own country.

Das : In that you have all my sympathy and support. Now, tell me, Subhas, what sort of help do you think you will get from Germany and Italy ?

Subhas : I have at present much moral support from the German public. The Führer, the man of iron will, the strongest and the most dynamic personality alive today, has repeatedly assured me that, once the operation on the Eastern front is decided, a part of the Whermachet and Luftwaffe, many army personnel and technicians will be available to serve under the proposed Indian National Army. They err in England, and in British-controlled India, who think that Germany has imperialist designs over India. Hitler has left behind irrefragable testimonies to show that, even before he came to power as the saviour of post-war Germany, India's political independence was a part of his scheme, the contemplated New Order in the world, which is based on a new economic system, different both from the shameless capitalist imperialism of the British and from the Bolshevic system in Russia. I have no doubt left with regard to the utter sincerity of Herr Hitler. But at the moment Hitler and the have-not Germany are severely tried on the Russian front. Behind the European fronts there is still the unrevealed might of America. So, until Russia is beaten, there cannot possibly be much military help from Germany.

With regard to Italy the talks between Mussolini and me are still in progress. But my real support will and should come from Germany, which is today, by far the most industrious, politically conscious, and scientifically advanced country in Europe. The Italians may say one thing and may mean another. But

German spirit is much different from the temper and character of the peoples of the Latin race. I still have to talk matters over with Mussolini and decide. I will be seeing him today at 5 P.M.

Latif : Do you think that the Axis will win the war ?

Subhas : If America is kept out of the scene or, at least, if she is impeded from launching a total war, I have no doubt that the whole world, including Russia, cannot stand a chance of victory over Germany, Japan and Italy combined together.

Rao : I feel sure that all lovers of India's freedom will support you both at home, in our own country, and abroad. The British have grown fat on suppressing and stifling truth and justice regarding our national fight. Now, Subhas, tell us in what way we could help you in your fight for India's freedom. The inspiring examples of men like Gandhi, Tilak, C. R. Das, the two Nehrus, and, above all, your own youthful exploits, have made us wed our life to that great cause, the freedom of India. This has given meaning to our lives and has cheered us with a divine romanticism. What do you want us to do ?

Subhas : Of course, you can also contribute your share in this common struggle. But what that share is going to be, I cannot say just yet. I will have to know you individually and personally before being able to suggest anything useful. But, unfortunately I am now leaving Italy and I will be coming back to Rome only on strict political errands. If you so desire, I can make arrangements for you to fly to Germany and there, I hope, we shall have more time to talk and discuss matters with you from a more practical standpoint.

Das : O that is grand ! (turning to Latif and Rao) What do you think about the idea of our going to Germany ?

Rao : Well, you know, my dear Bharat, I am always ready to do anything that will further the cause of India. If therefore I could be of any service to Subhas, I am only too willing to go to Germany. I am honoured.

Das : And what about you, Abdul ?

Latif : Well, I would, but.....Yes, I could.....but only... we'd better discuss the matter later on. Shall we ?

Das, winking his eyes to Latif : Yes, I know. We will talk the matter over later on. *E tu le stelle.....*

At that time the waitress came to inform us that lunch was ready on the table,

Subhas : Come, let's make a move ? We could talk it over at the table. Could'n't we ?

At lunch Latif looked rather worried. Evidently his heart was divided between his motherland and the Italian belle whom he had fallen in love with. Yet, he did not betray his inner tension but took part in the table talks. Das alone understood that the goddess Angiolina was present there dividing up the heart and loyalty of his young comrade, Abdul.

"Today it is fresh and nice, Isn't it ?", asked Rao to Subhas.

Subhas : Yes, it is. O I love Italian spring. Although I am not gifted with a poetic imagination, now I begin to feel the spirit of Dante Alighieri whose Divine Comedy once I used to read in Longfellow's translation. But now I begin to read it in the original. The spirit of Leopardi and Carducci and other Italian writers, poets and those master-minds of Italian art, come back to my mind so vividly. Have you toured about in Italy, seeing and studying all the spiritual, cultural and artistic monuments scattered all over this wonderful peninsula ?

"Yes, we have visited some of the most important art galleries in Florence, Rome, Perugia and other towns and cities of Italy. We went to Venice and the grand canal was a miracle," said Das.

Subhas : You know, my friends, I cannot now admit any distinction between the East and the West. I see great and divine works accomplished both in the East and in the West. There are great prophets and men of action both in the East and the West. Many eminent philosophers, thinkers, writers and artists are the gift of the West to the East, as also the East has got her great contributions to make to the West. For years long have I dreamt at bringing about a real union of hearts between the East and the West, a lasting and eternal wedlock between the Asiatic genius and the Western civilisation. I often say to myself : I should never shrink back although the omens I see before me for achieving such a lasting wedlock are inauspicious. Today we need men who will not deny, but accept the modern spirit of the western countries and integrate and enhance and sublimate it with the religious and cultural genius of the East. *Lux ex oriente !*

Rao : Do you think, Subhas, that men like Gandhi and Ramakrishna are isolationists and that they stand in the way of such a heart-communion between the East and the West ?

Subhas : I cannot answer that question very categorically. In a sense Gandhiji is a bridge-builder between the East and the

West, because his religion is in fact nothing but the religion of Humanity. But he is certainly handicapped in some ways from being a bridge-builder to such an extent as were Rabindranath or Rammohun. Gandhiji's utterances do not mean much to Indian Moslems and to many orthodox Christians of the West. The message of Ramakrishna, especially in its Vivekananda-version, has, in fact, a universal significance and knows not any boundaries of either the East or the West.

Das : To tell you the truth, dear Subhas, that is my own dream. Now I want to tell you one thing. I have no other purpose in life but to continue to explore, live and preach the unfathomable depths of Humanity, in its religious, philosophical, social, political and economic aspects. When an ideal looms before the mind the life becomes worth living. Does'nt it ?

Subhas : You know how much I share and appreciate your sentiments. You seem to depict my own inner life-story. I returned from England as an idealist and that idealism has always grown within me. I feel it will never die as long as there is breath in my nostrils. Although my bitter experiences with the political life, not only in the British-owned India, but also everywhere underneath the sun, not only of today, but of all times gone by, as disclosed to us by historians, have brought me to conclusions different from those of Mahatmajī, the root of our idealism, nevertheless, is the same : ideals of humanity, freedom and socio-political progress

BRAHMACHARYA

Years ago, on one December morning, when I was walking alone in the *Maidan* of Calcutta, I had a wonderful experience. The breeze was then blowing. The green grass, the open space, and the trees around me became a living reality. I felt then what the Vedic seers saw and proclaimed that this whole universe is a living organism and that my salvation consists in realising myself in it. There was then no "I and thou" for me, but only the ocean of "I AM" in which I was then immersed. A new light, a new inspiration, came to me that day. That experience thrilled my body, soul and mind, all of which became one at that wonderful moment. In that blessed hour I had a glimpse, as it were, into an ineffable something, an ecstatic vision, a rapture, in which I saw and heard things which it is hard for mortals to describe. This is the vision about which Dante sings while beginning his *Paradiso* :

*Nel ciel che più della sua luce prende
Fu'io, e vidi cose che ridire
Nè sa ne può qual di lassù discende.*

In heaven where shines most His light
I was rapt, and glimpsed those things which to describe
One neither knows nor can, who descends from there.

Then all the dark corners of the world became lit up and I experienced the divine significance of human existence. The thrill and vividness of that vision was such that, every time I felt wavering or despondent in later life, on merely remembering that blessed vision, I gathered strength and never lost heart since. At that time a wedding of my heart to that lofty ideal took place. The writings of Gandhiji were still fresh in my mind, specially those passages in which he spoke about the ideal of *Brahmacharya*. Gandhiji had said in all truth in his "My experiments" how, when he looked back to the past, he saw very clearly that everything he had been able to achieve, as a servant of India and humanity, centred around that vow of *Brahmacharya* which he took late in life. 'Subhas, you shall be a *Brahmacharin* all throughout your life, because great work you have to accomplish in your country', I said to myself. For that divine ideal, viz. to serve my country to the best of my ability, I then decided to stick firm to the vow of *Brahmacharya* and thus canalise and sublimate all my energy and life to the contemplation and realisation of that great ideal which then loomed before my mind.

Das : O how interesting ! Do continue, Subhas. You may not realise how helpful is your narrative to us. Do describe every detail of your experience. Please, do tell us more about it.

Subhas : Regarding the doctrine of *Brahmacharya* Gandhiji and I hold one and the same view. Nothing worthwhile is ever achieved in this world, nor any seed is sown in time that will bear fruits in eternity, but through *Brahmacharya*, which is undivided dedication of oneself to one ideal, worthy of a thinking man. We call it in Bengali : *ekagrochitta mon*, which means one-pointedness of our mind towards a definite course or ideal in life.

The power of *Brahmacharya* is such that you gain ever-growing physical strength and never-ending mental vigour enabling you to pursue your ideal. This ideal is today lived by Führer. He told me a little bit of his personal story, when I lunched with him at Berchtesgaden. I felt a thrill when I discovered

a few parallels in Führer's life and mine. The Church has imposed the vow of celibacy on all her consecrated ministers and servants. If what is imposed by law becomes self-imposed by sheer force of conviction, with a burning desire to achieve a great ideal in life, there is hardly anything impossible for such a one. It is ours to work. But God's to make His garden flower and fructify.

On returning home, I was absorbed in thought and recollection on the ocean of psychological forces that were at work during that vivid experience at the *Maidan*. Thoughts flooded into my mind and the ideal of *Brahmacharya* shining clearer before my heart. Then I remembered what Milton had said in his *Comus* :

..... a hidden strenght,
 'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity.
 She that has that, is clad in complete steel,
 And like a quivered Nymph with arrows keen
 May trace huge forests, and unharboured heaths,
 Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wildes,
 Where through the sacred rays of chastity,
 No savage fierce, bandit or mountaineer
 Will dare to soil her virgin purity :
 Some say no evil things that walk by night,
 In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
 Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost
 That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
 No goblin, or swart faery of the mine
 Hath hurtful power o'er virginity.
 Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
 Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
 Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
 And spotted mountain pard, but set at nought
 The frivolous bolt of Cupid.....
 That wise Minerva wore, unconquered virgin
 Wherewith she freezed her foes to congeal'd stone.
 So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity,
 That when a soul is sincerely found so.....

Then its parallel texts in the book of Wisdom of Solomn, in Phedrus of Plato and in all the classical and religious literatures of the world come back to my mind. That day, I made a solemn vow which still gives me courage and carries me through many a trial and ordeal in life. From that day onwards I have gone ahead. Even when it became very difficult for my heart to defy Gandhism

in its applied politics, I did not waver, propped up by the inscrutable strenght of that vow I took on that breezey morn, on that December day, in Calcutta *Maidan*. God was the only witness then.

Das : How wonderful ! You are the reflection of the Indian yogic genius, and your loyalty to the best of India's religious traditions is now made known.

Subhas : To the best of human traditions. The seeds of spiritual vision and religious passion are sown, ingrained, as it were, in the heart and soul of everyone born in Hindustan. There is no receding from this great path. Unless one is propped up by the spiritual fortress of purity, nothing worthwhile in this world is ever achieved. A life without self-examination and self-purification is not worth living.

Rao : Wonderful ! We are supposed to be talking with a revolutionary politician and a "terrorist", as the British propagandists stigmatize you ! Yet, we are hearing from you about God, chastity, and purification ! I believe, Subhas, our countrymen and the world will have something to think about when the history of this meeting is one day put in black and white.

Latif : Who knows how many conversations like these Subhas Chandra might have held ? Now, is there any difference between the ascetic Gandhiji and the revolutionary Subhas Chandra ?

At about 1 P.M. they finished their lunch and returned to the study room of Subhas. At 1-30 P.M. the waitress came to inform Subhas that two officials from the Japanese Embasay had come there to meet Subhas Chandra on appointment.

Subhas then, turning to the Indian comrades, said : So, here we are. If you come to Germany we shall be able to get to know each other better, and we shall then be able to decide in what way we could serve our country to our best.

Then Subhas wrote a small note to a certain Signor Mario Carlotti at the Italian Foreign Office, requesting him to make the necessary arrangements to conduct one or all of them to Germany if and when they decide to go after due consideration.

While handing it over to Das, Subhas said : Do make use of this recommendation if and when you require. This letter will take you safely to Germany by air whenever you decide to go. I may be staying on in Europe, in Germany, perhaps until the end of April 1942.

They bade Subhas good-bye and returned home, each one thinking about their respective share in helping to free India politically, socially and economically.

SUBHAS-MUSSOLINI INTERVIEW

In the afternoon Latif went out alone for his evening stroll. Rao and Das went to Miccozzi's house where they were invited to tea that day.

Subhas Chandra had gone that evening to the Palazzo Venezia to discuss matters with Mussolini.

As his car drove in, there were a dozen Fascist soldiers who greeted Subhas saying: "*Viva l'India*" (long live India). Guards of honour accompanied Subhas. The Foreign Minister, Conte Galeazzo Ciano, received Subhas at the palace and showed him in to Benito Mussolini's office-room.

A spacious and richly decorated hall. Many rich and artistic portraits of Garibaldi, Mazzini, Cavour, Victor Emmanuel II and others. Several telephones, highly mechanised means of communication in the hall. Files, registers and official books in one corner of the hall. A large portrait of King Victor Emmanuel III and of the royal family. Mussolini, in military uniform, was seen intensely busy. Then he was not wearing a cap on his bald head. Seeing Subhas at the door, Mussolini got up, went up to the door and, shaking hands with Subhas, embraced him. Then taking hand-in-hand, they drew near the table. They sat down and started the conversation.

The Foreign Minister, Conte Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law, was also present at the conversation.

Mussolini: Are you quite comfortably put up in the Hotel, Mr. Bose? I am sending Captain Piccarelli every day to inquire about you in the Hotel.

Subhas: O I am quite comfortably put up there. Thanks.

Mussolini: Since I wrote to you that note, I had a phone call, the other day, with Adolf (Hitler) and we further discussed whether, and in what way, we could transport some men and material to the East. Now, as you see for yourself, we are hard pressed, both from the East and the West. The Russian colossus is not yet laid low, nor the incalculable American resources are fully revealed. But once the *terra incognita* (unknown land) is explored, and our line is cut straight, then, Subhas Bose, the might of Fascist arms will be at your disposal.

Subhas : Yes, you are right. In the present context that is but a foregone conclusion.

Mussolini : By the way, yesterday at the Foreign Office it was suggested that you could gain more sympathy and support from the people of Italy, if you were to form a Provisional Government of India in Rome or in Berlin, exactly as the defeated governments of Belgium, France, Holland, Poland and Greece have formed in London.

Subhas grimly answered : No, that is not possible. There is no question of forming any Provisional Government of free India, not in Europe, at any rate. Later on, after my return to Asia, and before launching the campaign, I may form a Provisional Government, which then will not be mine, but of the great country of which Subhas Chandra Bose is but an infinitesimal part, a humble servant and a fighting soldier.

Mussolini : If you feel that the formation of a Provisional Government in Europe will not further your interests, nor it will be compatible with self-respect, then, you may do what seems best for you.

Adolf was telling me when I last met him in Munich how he remained impressed by your personality, your love of inner freedom, and the brave plans you have mapped out in your mind. Adolf further said that if you were an Indian, then all Indians must be of the same Aryan race as the Germans, and as such, will form part of greater Germany, or rather, Germany would form part of greater India, that has to give a lead and directive to the world. In that new world order there will be peace for a thousand years.

Subhas : Well, thanks for your appreciation. Yes, I am born a free mason. As a free man I will continue to fight the present and future exploiters of my country. As a free man I will fall in the battlefield. I want freedom, more freedom, fullest freedom, for me, for my country, for the whole Mankind.

Mussolini : I must congratulate you for that wonderful speech you made before the students in Berlin. There so clearly and orderly you have outlined the future of free India, and the strong centralisation and powerful organisation that are needed there. I have studied the text of your speech almost by heart, as that will help to clear my own mind. Dr. Astorre Lupatelli, the Rector of the University for the Foreigners in Perugia, has received an appreciative report of that speech, which is now being circulated.

Of the many fond dreams I dream in my mind one is un-

doubtedly the cultural relationship between our two great countries. The Senator Giovanni Gentile had sent me a draft of the Indo-Italian Cultural Relationship Scheme which, we hope, will materialise as soon as the war is over.

Subhas : First things come first. Our first preoccupation is to free India from the foreign yoke. To tell you the truth, we have at present relegated culture and cultural relationships to the last place. Before we could think of any cultural relationship we have, first of all, to free India from the claws of the British Lion. Then we have to embark upon freeing India from many internal tyrants like the dead traditions, religious taboos, communal cancer, medieval feudalism of the Indian princes, and many other evils. When we have sufficiently clothed our naked limbs and fed the walking skeletons, then we may give our attention to culture, Self-realisation and all the rest of it. First we are determined to live and then speculate and philosophize.

Ciano turning towards Mussolini, in a low voice : How true, how logical, how dignified are his words !

Mussolini : You are perfectly right. India is today in a transition period. The sons of the soil know better than any body else what is really befitting, and what is not, to their own country. But, all being well, I do hope you will reciprocate our earnest desire to exchange students and scholars between our two countries to interpret the respective messages in the most efficient way.

Subhas : The doors of cooperation are always open. India has all her portals wide open to the four corners of the world. Open-mindedness has been one of the characteristic features of India, and India will grow on that national heritage.

Mussolini : I have got to discuss some other matters with you. We should have a long afternoon free. Perhaps we shall fix it up later on. In the meantime, it will give Edda, Ciano and me great pleasure if you could dine with us the day after tomorrow, at Ciano's residence. From there we could drive down to our country villa, and if the weather permits, we shall go to the Forum—which they call *Forum Mussolini*.

Subhas : Thanks very much. But I have some other previous engagements in Germany and, I am afraid, I must keep them. But I expect better luck next time.

Ciano : If it is not so urgent we can easily cancel your appointments in Germany or postpone them by phone, right now.

Subhas turning to Ciano, with a smile : No. Appointments,

once fixed, should be adhered to at all costs, unless something more important and pressing duty compels one occasionally to cancel or postpone them. But in my case, I do not think that there is enough reason now to alter or cancel my engagements in Germany. But I do hope to be back in Rome again towards the middle of next month and then I shall be happy to dine and talk matters over with you, under the light of further developments in the war and the changing political situation in the world.

Mussolini humorously said : Come, then, let us move. I will accompany you, Subhas Chandra, back to the Hotel. I have to go that way myself now. Today I am your guard of honour.

They came down. Ciano motored down to his house. Mussolini and Subhas got in another car and drove down to Exelcior Hotel. *Il Duce* stayed with *Netaji* for some time in the Hotel after which he left. Subhas left for Berlin the next day by air.

WEDLOCKED IN THE MOONLIGHT.

That same day when Subhas-Mussolini interview took place there was developing a Platonic romance, under the silver wings in the moonlight, in the Piazza Spagna. Latif and Angiolina had met there.

Angiolina and Abdul went up to the Monte Pincio talking, discussing and discoursing together about the mysteries of life, about friendship and love, about God and immortality, about the cause of happiness and misery in human life.

At the Monte Pincio they both sat under a shady tree. Zephyr was again blowing as they became merged one into the other. Then the external world did not mean anything to them. Yet, Platonic love, or divine idealism, was at the root of their love and friendship, their embrace, their ecstasy.

Angiolina : Never in life is given to a mortal man

To soar so high as heaven and earth to scan.

He is but a speck in the infinity of this universe,

In which his tiny self is cast to swim afloat or immerse.

Heart beats lonesome for long,

Until another lonely bird flies along,

Which like pigeons in spring tide,

Falls in love in body, soul and mind.

O life is wilderness without that song of love,

That vague yearning in every breast to soar above

The present straits and reach a blissful land,
Where existence is fulfilled, all woes are brought to end.

Latif : Restless he walks from death to death,
The source of peace he misses in that frivolous mirth.
But *tat param Brahma param vrūhantam*
Yatānikayam sarvabhūtheshu ghūdam
Vishvasyaikam pariveshtitaram
Isam tam jnatvāmṛta bhavanti.
Vedāhamēvam puruṣam mahantam
Adityavarnam tamasah parastat
Tameva viditvatimṛityumeti
Nanyah pantha vidhyatēnaynaya

Angiolina : Sweet, melodious is what you said,
Please repeat, explain. What's it ?

Latif : Sorry dear. I just derailed off into another tongue.
Through the association of ideas and cross-currents of thoughts I
just fell into an Upanishadic swoon.

Angiolina : What Upanishad is that from ? Tell me, what's
the meaning ?

Latif : That is from the Swetaswatarōpanishad, third chapter
7 & 8 verses. Now let me translate it for you ?

Immortal become those who know that God,
Transcending the world, the Supreme Lord (Brahma),
Indwelling in every body, hidden in everything.
This great Person do I know,
Him who shines like the sun,
Who transcends the world of darkness.
By knowing Him alone are we freed,
From Death's jaws. No other way is there,
No, none. No other way, none.

Angiolina : How sweet ! How true ! How wonderful !
Those refined, subtle fires of my heart
Are now touched. Music of God is heard,
O clear, bright, sparkling I see a road,
That will lead me ever onward.

Tell me, now, Abdul dear, what you are to me ?
Whether your ideals are mine, or whether you see
This solemn main of life with a divine eye,
Impelling us to row on to the yonder shore and fly ?
Nearer you come to me, dearer I whisper now
To your ears, to your heart, which somehow

Or other, I feel I should not hide from you.
 Comrade of mine for ever, incline on to my breast,
 And in your fond embrace, for ever, may I rest !
 But not you, Abdul, just a lump of flesh and blood,
 But that mind and heart that reign behind.
 For I know your name Abdul means "servant of God".
 You in me, and I in you, but both in the hands of God.

Latif : What I longed to hear, now you say,
 What my heart was beating for, now may
 Be an experienced fact, not a dream,
 Which lives but for a moment and then
 Fades away. Beyond both you and me
 Lives, reigns, that Blissful Beauty,
 By whose grace and blessing we live,
 In whom may our love grow and thrive !

The hell of loneliness is no more for me,
 The wilderness of desolation too
 Is fled far, far away from my soul.
 Our hearts will beat united always.
 Nothing, nay not even death, can rob
 Us off this eternal, indissoluble wedlock.

You and I agree that our love shall'nt be of common mould,
 Like those thoughtless youngsters who have their minds sold
 To greed, passion, lust. Pure we have been, pure we remain
 In time and eternity. Pure, unsullied love knows no decline ;
 No, it does not die even with dying age, eternal, immortal.
 Thither we march together, my darling, thither we go.

Angiolina holding the hands of Abdul, in a grave, but sweet
 and angelic voice, said :

Listen, between us no more national barriers exist. I am an
 Italian, you are an Indian. The union of our hearts must be the
 symbol of Indo-Italian understanding and cultural cooperation. In
 Love that is God, in God who is Love, all the apparant gulfs
 between races, creeds and nationalities are bridged, and one
 embraces and enfolds everyone in one supreme, eternal, undying
 love. People may say that we are in love and we got married.
 Yes, we are married but certainly not in their sense. For many to
 get married means to find outlets for suppressed passions ; for us
 it means more restraint and sublimation of our physical life, and
 canalizing of the vital energy to serve an ideal—and a marching
 together, a struggling together, a winning life's palm of victory in

partnership—we should admire the flower of youth—but not touch and spoil it. The stars shine at a distance without touching.

Latif leaning on Angiolina's breast : You, dear little angel, you are voicing my own heart. Yesterday we heard a most inspiring story narrated to us by Subhas Chandra Bose about his vision and experience in the Calcutta *Maidan* and how he then took the vow of chastity or *Brahmacharya* to serve his ideal. Certainly for us, the thoughtful few, in this twentieth century, the complex and unbalanced man-woman problem cannot be solved but in ideal love, in the sense in which a man like Plato or Plotinus, Socrates or Buddha would mean that divine world, "Love."

Three ways left open to the youth of either sex in this century are clear. A normal married life with child-rearing and common household and social duties is the lot of the common man. There some kind of happiness is found when strict monogamous relations are observed with life-long fidelity on the principle *solius ad solam*. But today marriage is falling in disuse in many of the most scientifically and industrially advanced countries of both Europe and America, and in those parts of Asia where Western life is finding outlets in an unfiltered way. Hotel and community life is now substituting the family life. Children are born to the State, they say. Union is at will. Every woman is a potential wife to every man, as every man is a potential husband to every woman, but of their own free will.

Now let me open my heart as wide as the sky you see up above ? Now, no poetry, because we mean business now. Life is business. Life is also poetry. Let us discriminate clearly these two sides of one and the same life-medal ?

Now, Angiolina listen ! Ours will never be marriage in the ordinary sense of the word, with romance in the beginning and tragedy in the end. Nor we shall be like those who marry to have some legal positions secured. In Germany today marriage, and children born of marriage wedlock, entitle one to many blessings of the State. At the present stage of our mental development, knowing the world as we know it, responding to the call of Heaven as we hear it, there is no other way open to us but the path of ideal love and service. There shall be no binding or chaining of the one with the other. The only tie that will exist between you and me is the tie of an eternal and undivided love, of common struggles and common sufferings shared in common for common ideals to achieve, for common plans to materialise.

Angiolina (enfolding Latif) : This then is the great sacrament I have believed in, the consecration of two hearts in one ideal love, in one ideal life, in one ideal service, in one ideal suffering. No more shall we be two, but one, and right here, under the moonlight is the sacrament our of spiritual wedlock consecrated. Your heart is mine, mine is yours, but both yours and mine are God's. Where God does not bless, cheer and inspire, all, in the end, turn sour and bitter. He began, let Him bless this sacrament of the eternal union of our hearts, the eternal spring of our eternal love.

They talked, loved, embraced each other, two young idealist hearts, consecrated on the alter of Love, Love not of the common mould, but of that divine and immortal kind about which Plato wrote in his dialogues. Hours passed like seconds. Until 5-30 P.M. they continued conversing about matters dear and near to their hearts.

At home they expected Angiolina all night. But the graceful face of that sweet angel was not seen. At the hotel, Das and Rao expected Abdul until 12 P. M. after which they went to bed thinking that Latif would come back home later as he did on a previous night.

The day was breaking in the East. But those two dreamers were still in one another's arms, interlocked in one love, in one heart, in one embrace.

Latif continuing said : Yes, dear, as you say all our differences are now bridged. Your Italian Catholicism and my Indian Islam are now wedded in a common love, in common service.

Angolina : I have heard much about Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and about Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit in India, and their ideal love and marriage seem to me to approach nearer our ideal. Only we insist more on God and God-basis. Call it God, Love or Beauty, for all these are one. "Truth, Goodness, and Entity are one," said Thomas Aquinas.

Latif : Have you read St. Thomas Aquinas ? I have hardly heard his name in connection with Avvicenna and Avverroes whom he thought he refuted. I have'nt read much of his scholastic stuff. But his personal purity, high intellectual integrity and synthetic genius I appreciate very much indeed.

Angiolina : Yes, as a student of Rome University I studied Aquinas. Today of all the modern writers, I think, it is Jacques Maritain who is putting new flesh and blood into the forgotten pages of *Summa Theologiae*, which today, unfortunately, is known

to a few ecclesiastical students and priests only. But there is gold hidden in his '*latino discreto*,' as Dante called the language of that great Dominican philosopher of the middle ages.

Latif: We should pursue our studies together. You can lit up the dark corners of my mind, and, as it lies in my power, I shall be of some help to you. You are to me today the embodiment of womanhood. Out of millions of women scattered all over the world you are now my only Beloved. In your love is symbolized my own love for India and for Humanity.

Angiolina: And I too must be integrated and enhanced by your love. You are my only lover after God, in God, for God, who is the Reality behind the appearance, the Substance behind the shadow, the Permanent in and through the transient. To Him does all Creation tend, towards Him all men aspire, in Him do they rest. Where there is God there is everlasting love which knows no decline, but grows, and always grows beyond the time-space-bound limitations, reaching and touching the very infinity of God.

Latif: Quite so, my dear. We have the unanimous voice of all those who have aspired after great and divine ideals, who substantially have sung us the same song. Hear now Ibnu 'l-Farid:

With my Beloved I alone have been,
 When secrets tenderer than evening airs
 Passed, and the vision blest
 Was granted to my prayers,
 That crowned me, else obscure, with endless fame,
 For the while amazed between
 His beauty and majesty
 I stood in silent ecstasy,
 Revealing that which ov'r my spirit went and came.
 Lo, in His face commingled,
 Is every charm and every grace;
 The whole of beauty singled
 Into a perfect face.
 Beholding Him would cry,
 There is no God but He,
 And He is the Most High.

Or do you want me to quote from seers of your own church, from St. John of the Cross or St. Theresa? From Plato, Plotinus or St. John, to set the ideal right, and prove that both of us are marching along that path of divine love?

At 7 A.M. they got up and went to a neighbouring cafe

where they had their breakfast. Then they hurried to catch the tram and went to the outskirts of Rome to honeymoon the rest of the day together. They were talking, sometimes playing, indulging in humorous wits, sometimes walking, sometimes sitting together, but at all times together - together - together.

Before seven in the evening they come back, reached the Piazza Spagna. Both of them looking at the fountain, in a sweet melodious tune, began to sing together in a clear and distinct voice :

From these shores of infinite love
No receding, nev'r, but we will move
Onwards, as those eternal stars up above.
Ye mortals who tread your weary way,
Stop to think and follow our ray,
Come ye all and sing with us and say :

Latif, solo :

*Na tatra suryo bhati na chandratarakam
Nema vidyute bhhanti kuto' yamagnih
Tameva bhantamanubhanti sarvam
Tasya bhasha sarvamidam vibhati,
As Mundakopanishad proclaims.*

Angiolina, solo :

There, in that God-blest land,
Neither the sun, moon, nor stars emit
Their beaming light, but God
Will be their eternal sunshine, as
Isaias prophesies, proclaims.

Both together :

Here we go treading the mortal earth,
With immortal sunshine overhead;
Our sun of love will never set,
But will guide us through till we have met
In a better land, in our eternal Fatherland.

They then returned from the Piazza Spagna and Latif accompanied his sweetheart to her cottage, kissed her good-bye, and returned to the hotel.

On reaching home, Angiolina narrated the whole story candidly and frankly to her anxious mother, relatives and friends. Latif, on his return, sang his romance to his friends at the hotel. Then Das and Rao said : "God bless your new adventure, your new career, your new romance, and may your

love remain ever-fresh, ever-alive, ever-free, ever-serving". The same good wishes and greetings Angiolina received from her own people at home.

Latif and Angiolina thereupon used to meet every evening. The parish priest objected that Angiolina should go and get herself engaged with a Moslem and live together without canonical marriage and priest's blessing.

Angiolina bravely answered:

What more do you need, my good parish priest
For me than to get married under the moon, amidst
The witnessing stars, thrilled by the dance of Creation ?
Or does love find creed or race barriers ?
There were the divine breeze gently blows,
Love flourishes and eternal fruits it bears.
A sacrament greater than this who cares,
When God Himself, through His living voice,
Has inspired our love, bless'd it without any pomp or noise ?

The priest and his acolytes raised a storm against their Platonic marriage, while both Abdul and Angiolina remained firm. But when the persecution become unbearable, they eloped to the hill tops near Gran Sasso, in Abbruzzi, central Italy. They lived there for a while thinking out ways and means as to how best they could devote themselves to serve India and Humanity, to bring about mutual understanding and co-operation between all nations and races on this earth.

CHAPTER II

AT HITLER'S BERCHTESGADEN

POETS IN AN ABBEY ORCHARD

Germany in the early months of the year 1942 ! The insuperable German genius for organisation was still there. The hope for the final victory was still in the hearts of millions. Hitler's personality still dominated the scene. The totalitarian machinery of the State was growing more and more heavy. The all-controlling power of the Nazi State was grinding down all free thought, all unfettered exercise of one's own free will, and checking all independent action of the citizens.

That Germany which had outdistanced and surpassed all other European nations in industry, hard labour, power of deep philosophical thought, was then withering under the hard blows she received on every front. Yet the old bravery and "I-will-not-surrender" spirit was asserting itself. The spell of that genial creator of modern Germany, that man of iron will, was still so powerful that the masses of the German people hoped against hope and cheerfully surrendered their material and spiritual resources to defend their Fatherland. When the present victory tidal waves of the Allies are over, and when the future historians will begin to record facts and events under the right perspective, there will then shine a chapter of German heroism to which there will be hardly any parallel in the recorded pages of human history.

In the South-Eastern confines of Bavaria there is a small town of about ten thousand inhabitants, 1500 to 2000 ft. up above the sea level, whose history goes back to 1100 A.D., when the district of Berchtesgaden was set apart as a spiritual principality for the Church. In recent years the all-importance of that town grew with Hitler who made it his chief residence and, consequently, almost the capital town of the whole of the Nazi Revolution. The network of Nazism was centering around the Reichstag and the Chancery in Berlin and Berchtesgaden in Bavaria.

A few days after Subhas had left for Germany, Das, Rao and Latif met and discussed about their future plans. Latif decided to stay on at Gran Sasso in the Appennine with Angiolina until the time their way was revealed to them from Above. Rao and Das, making use of the letter which Subhas gave them, left the Rome

airfield and flew straight to Berlin. They visited Berlin, then journeyed along to Amburg, from there to Essen and Cologne, from there to Munich and then to Berchtesgaden, where they interviewed Subhas Chandra for the second time.

At Berchtesgaden there are three old churches one of which has an abbey with Romanesque cloisters. On the one side of it there is a garden where Subhas Chandra Bose, Bharata Mata Das and Sanjiva Rao entered to relish the evening breeze, to get basked under the refreshing beams of the setting sun.

MAHATMA GANDHI

Subhas looked rather weary that day although his wonted thoughtfulness, gravity and even occasional smile were there.

Subhas : You know, my friends, when one has seen and experienced the world, as it is in the extramental reality, one wonders whether all our strivings and struggles are worth anything at all. Truth struggles against untruth, justice against injustice, violence against non-violence and this fight is unending. It began from the beginning of history, and it will continue till the end of the world. But every honest struggle we must face and not shrink back from. I have often asked myself : what is the purpose of my life ? Why am I born and grown on this earth ? The answers given to this ever-recurring question by the few thoughtful minds is there, in the pages of history of philosophy and religions. I know that until one face, this fundamental question and solve it for oneself, there can never be peace in his or her heart.

Whatever my political activities might have been, in the heart of my heart, I hearken to the song of Bhagavad Gita, Buddha's Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path, Jesus' Gospel and Plato's dialogues, which return to my mind with ever-renewed significance.

You know I have disagreed from Gandhiji on many details of practical politics, or rather, on principles of political economy applied to the hard realities of modern life. Yet, I must tell you in all truth, that until now I have not yet come across a man who has gone ahead along the path of truth and justice so unflinchingly as Gandhiji. In him we have the honour of India's cultural heritage saved. Rabindranath, although of my own province, could not have survived those violent shocks which our dear Bapuji had to encounter. Comparisons are always odious and each one is great in his own sphere, each great in his or her own vocational career. Yet, Gandhiji is the architect of contemporary India, who through

direct personal appeal tamed lions into lambs and murderers into mystics. In his eyes I have always read an ineffinable something, a divine effulgence, a sense of divine purity and transparent sincerity irradiating from his face. The more I think of that wonderful man the more grows my appreciation. My love towards him knows no bounds. Now that I am marooned in this war-battered Europe, now that I look at India from such a distance, my dream about Indian ideals—human ideals—as embodied in Gandhiji grow more vivid in me. I am not a poet, not a gifted orator—not in English, at any rate. But there are some moments when even prosaic minds get inspired, touched by the hand of Heaven, by the thrill and living experience of human truths in life. Now in this moment, as I stand here, the personality of Gandhiji looms brighter in my mind. Gandhiji is the greatest soul alive today in India, in Asia, and in the world.

India's conscience he remains, Socrates of modern times,
 Though small and frail a man he look, greatness, sublimity,
 A princely royalty, a divine effulgence seem to spring
 From his truth-transfigured face, from the core of his deep
 humanity.

For a precious life so splendidly lived, what tribute,
 What homage shall we pay ? For years of service, solemn,
 solid, mute ?

For his love of 'Truth and 'Truth in love ? For all he did
 To arouse and raise India's pride and self-respect ?
 To set the captives free, vindicating values in human life ?

Dharma built on ethics, perfuming life with sanctity ?

Mammonism, hedonism, untruth, immorality of every kind
 He challenged both by exemplified life and noble words.

The yonder shore of religions his mind has reached,
 Self-enlightenment, Bliss and 'Truth, the goal of every reli-
 gious road.

Through these rugged moorlands and vast dreary desert sands,
 Through thorns and thistles, through this life's wilderness,
 A path-lighter, a torch-bearer, a heaven-sent guide, you,
 Bapuji,

Pass through, on to the land of your dreams, unto Infinity !
 For, Truth enlightens your heart, God strengthens your
 pilgrimage.

The gospel of the Cross through you to many is now revealed,
 To millions life you give, dear, sweet sage of our modern age.

On the shores of timeless eternity you stand, one with All,
All-embracing is One, whence you become Mahatma, O great
soul !

May you live long to reap the harvest your heart has sown,
To see India free and all the subject nations here below,
Federation of all freed nations, war and violence brought to
end ;

When this planet with life therein become worth longing for,
When truth, love and sincerity shall permeate every heart,
Utopias are realised, and on Freedom's wings when all could
soar,

When God's kingdom dawns and in a choir of angels we
could sing :

Glory be to the Highest and peace to men of good will on
earth.

Brothers, sisters we are everywhere, with one destined end,
Let this world be our country, deepest in human heart our
God,

Doing good to everyone of every race and every creed, our
religious road.

UNITY

Das : Subhas, You are wonderful. Now you are more than
a poet. We have heard some friends telling us that you are
completely devoid of emotion. But now your deep-seated emotional
convictions come out and we are cheered. Underneath Subhas
Chandra Bose, the strong-willed politician and cold logician, there
hides Subhas Chandra, the son of Indian soil, an heir to India's
cultural past, an eye-opener to communalists and narrow nationalists.

Rao : Today the sky is clear. Those thin veils covering
the face of Heaven's daughter up above bring our minds and hearts
under their spell. Now we feel far removed from the bomb shells,
from those political quarrels and diplomatic sophistries. No logic
is here, but intuition penetrates behind the veil, and we see and
hear truths which few mortals can know or feel.

You know, dear Das, dear Subhas, today at this moment I
get a glimpse into the world of sense-free bliss, eternal, real, living,
infinite and all those wonderful epithets which the Upanishads
make use of while describing bliss or *anandam*.

Subas : Yes, the Upanishads are the masterpiece of human
wisdom and the loftiest document on religious realisation.

But mind you, not the Upanishads alone but the scriptures, and sages of every race, of every clime. We are citizens of this world, which is today becoming "pocketable". All those ancient barriers between man and man are being broken down and the cultural and spiritual heritage of every people are brought to the doors of every one. The distance between countries is growing less and less and further scientific developments will make it practically nil.

This ever has been my constant dream,

To break those barriers that seem

To stand in our way from living welded into one.

For *advaitam* is all which is our only mental sun.

Sweet reasonableness may not achieve this,

But hard-won battles of mind, heart and soul ;

For, better reasoned violence than cowardice,

An honest war that comes unsought which can toll

That divine note which from a pure heart springs,

Which our sailing barges to immortality's port brings.

Fear ye not, my friends, to me so dear,

For, to that ideal *swaraj* we are coming near,

And nearer still as the days roll on,

To be enthroned in the heart of India's every son,

Of every daughter of our great and ancient land.

This battle win we must, redeeming our Motherland.

No more shall you bewail, O my distant India dear,

All your shackles will fall, for we come from here

To strike all your enemies down and set you free,

For you are great, mellifluous, divine country mine.

India's children arise, rise above those petty squabbles,

Far above those communal walls and provincial-mindedness.

Children of Hindustan arise, sleep not ere you have fought,

Your noble battle and have won the goddess we have always
sought,

That priceless gem and immortal treasure of freedom,

For India's every son and every daughter reborn in a new
kingdom,

Where love, truth and justice will ever reign,

And our adored Motherland India shall ever remain.

Make of Hindustan a holy land, a Pakistan,

Make of Pakistan a Hindustan and as many a "stan"

As there are races and creeds in our ancient land.

India of my dreams, India of my love, India my all,
 Before you I bend my knees, on your altar I offer my soul,
 All that I have, all that I am, for I am born
 In you lap. To you my Mother my love I have sworn,
 And you know what that holy oath means,
 Which like the drum of eternity in my ears rings.
 And I will never withdraw, no, never in life,
 Until have I gone all the way in this noble strife.
 On thy holy altar have I made self-immolation,
 As an holocaust pure, unsullied, unspotted, free.
 Let thy unity be preserved with no victimization.
 Let your sons and daughters embrace each other in a sea
 Of love and brotherliness. Let one single wedlock
 Bind Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Parsees, Sikhs. Let none mock
 India's outstretched arms to embrace and enfold,
 Unite and unify, absorb and assimilate all in one fold.
 Lead, India's Guide and Master,
 Twiddlers knock down and grant us all to foster
 Understanding, sympathy and toleration ;
 But with a brave, irrevocable determination,
 To win Independence and on Freedom's wings to fly.
 And keep us eternally worthy of Thee, of Thee, of Thee !

SUBHAS IN A MONASTRY

After this Subhas Chaudra leaning on a tree, with the
 eyes turned skywards, stood still for nearly three minutes.
 Das and Rao, enthralled by the flow of words, by the sweet
 rhyming verses, by that extempore poetic rhapsody, which flowed
 forth from his lips, stood meditating, silenced, awe-struck.

After a few minutes we heard the bell of the neighbouring
 abbey calling the inmates to go to the garden and work or
 alternatively to go out for an evening walk.

At that time there appeared a friar, clad in a white
 tunic and black mantle, slowly walking about with an open
 breviary in his hand. Afterwards, seeing us by the side of
 the tree, he came to us and said : Hello, friends, you seem to
 be absorbed in thought. Have you lost your way in this strange
 land ? Can I help you in any way ?

Rao : No, we have not lost our way, nor we feel we
 are strangers in this land. We are only spending this evening

together under this clear Bavarian sky, enchanted by the beams of the setting sun.

Friar : Any how, you look rather too much absorbed in thought and all three of you look rather tired. Why, won't you come up and have a cold drink, or a cup of tea, as you like, at the abbey, over there ?

As the friar was saying "there", pointing towards the abbey, he saw a gentleman with a lady walking towards him. The friar greeted them saying : Hello, Heilers, you are fifteen minutes late. At least this time you have almost failed in your appointment. Come along. We will take these three Indian friends also to the abbey and chat for a while at the table.

So the party of six entered the abbey. Long and dark cloisters. Arched windows and painted roofs. Wonderful mosaics on the wall. Everywhere neat and clean and orderly. Many cells and a few halls. Two private chapels inside. A long refectory with wooden tables and benches. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with the ideal of plain living and high thinking, of work and prayer. A rich library and an up-to-date reading room with the principal journals, periodicals, and magazines from Germany and a lot of Catholic literature.

The friar after, spreading a table cloth, went to the kitchen to fetch us tea, biscuits and cakes. Another friar brought us bottles of beer.

The friar turning towards Das : What would you prefer ? Tea or beer ?

Das : Tea, please.

Turning towards Subhas : What would you prefer ?

Subhas : A cup of tea, please.

Turning towards Rao : And you ?

Rao, looking at the beer bottle : A glass of beer, please.

The Heilers preferred glasses of beer. After serving them all, the friar also took a cup of tea.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE UNKNOWN GUEST

But Mr. Heiler was repeatedly staring at Subhas and was saying within himself : "I have seen the photo of this man somewhere." They talked on war, Hitler, on the Church, on religion etc., but all the time without enquiring, for a moment, into the names or the whereabouts of the Indians sitting with them.

Mr. Heiler continued looking at Subhas in such an inquisitive way that the friar got a bit annoyed and said : Well, Dr. Heiler,

you know that staring at people's face is not always welcome in any civilized society, not in Germany, at any rate.

Heiler : Sorry, I must apologize for being rather rude. I have been staring at that Indian gentleman with the navy blue overcoat, sitting over there (pointing towards Subhas), because the photographs of His Excellency Herr Subhas Chandra Bose I saw resemble him very much.

Friar : I also have noticed that at the first sight. But, at least, I hav'nt been so rude as you are by constantly staring at him.

Das with a smile : Well, friends, photographs cannot go wrong. Would you say that the photographs you saw resemble this gentleman (pointing towards Subhas) or that this gentleman resembles the photographs you saw ?

Heiler : I am not a metaphysician, nor I ever indulge in metaphysical subtleties, although I am aware that some subtle logicians and ontologists, while dealing with similarity and identity, say that the photograph resembles the man and not the man resembling the photograph, that creatures resemble the Creator but not the Creator resembling His creatures, that the art resembles the artist, but not the artist resembling his art etc. For me, in whatever sense you take it, it does not matter in the least. But I would very much like to know something about that grave and thoughtful gentleman over there (pointing towards Subhas).

Das : Well, the photographs cannot be mistaken. Our mind and tongue may cudgel and twist certain things to suit our own good, our bad or sportive intentions. But not so are the films exposed to the sunlight.

Heiler with some excitement : Well, friend, do you mean what you say ? Or am I only dreaming that I see H. E. Subhas Chandra Bose before me ?

Das : No, Sir, you are not dreaming. You are now sitting face to face with Subhas Chandra Bose.

"Good Heavens", Heiler said. He got up and shook hands with Subhas exclaiming : O how gracious ! Good Heavens !

Then Mrs. Heiler and the friar got up and shook hands with Subhas. They were exceedingly glad.

Dr. Heiler : Everything that has been written about Subhas Chandra Bose in Germany I have read with deepest interest. I have always considered you as the Führer of great India, who, after having undergone the hardest trials in political life, are now

chiseled out as the hardest Indian politician. Gandhiji's meek and non-violent methods may achieve some temporary benefit ; but it can never build up a State in the twentieth century world. India can not run counter to the world forces, nor she can afford to lag behind the age. Her youth is to be fashioned and drilled and all her potential energy is to be developed and canalized. A strong, powerfully organized, highly centralized, and rigidly controlled State is to emerge out of the present chaos and helplessness of India. Once she is set on foot as our Führer has done for Germany, there will be freedom for a thousand years for India and the world.

Besids, Subhas Bose has got that capacity to adapt the all-controlling machinery of the State to suit the Indian and human needs. What is needed is an all-controlling family-state without those grinding wheels. With wisdom, constant vigilance and never-ending re-adjustment we should build up an ideal State in India. As our Führer is much maligned by the malicious or ignorant foreigners, so you, dear Subhas Chandra, are now discredited by the British imperialists and the moderate nationalists of your own country. But a day will come when they will realize that you, although young in limbs, were the most practical and, at the same time, the most far-sighted statesman among all men and women who shine in the political horizon of India today. For you are the symbol of uncompromising freedom, of an all-controlling State economy, the symbol of unity and brotherhood between the various races and creeds of the Indian Nation.

I am all the more happy to meet you after hearing from a few S.S. soldiers, who are in the inner circle of Von Ribbentrop and Herman Göring, that you are now contemplating the scheme of forming an Indian National Army that will soon unfurl their national flag in the Indian soil. May that army arise ! May that army forge ahead until your national flag is hoisted up above the Government buildings both in Delhi and in the Provinces ! May you live long to see and reap the seeds you have sown, and march ahead, and make your country march with you, to the land of freedom, unity and ever-growing progress ! Subhas I am so happy today. Thrice happy today.

So saying he raised the glass of beer and toasted saying : To the health of Subhas Chandra, to the freedom, unity and progress of India, that great, ancient, and historical land !

When Dr. Heiler had finished speaking there was felt a visible emotional upheaval among the people present there. Mrs. Heiler,

with eyes revealing complacency and love, was sitting, now looking at Subhas, and now at her husband. The friar was visibly moved when he knew that the unknown guest was the same Subhas about whom he had read and dreamt so much.

Then the friar got up and said : Now let us introduce ourselves. This is Dr. Heiler from Berlin University and Mrs. Heiler. They are now spending a few days of rest at Berchtesgaden. I was known to them from my university days in Berlin and I invited them to spend this evening with me.

Then the friar turning towards the Heilers : This is Subhas Chandra Bose who now needs no further introduction. That is (pointing towards Das), that is, that is O I have not asked his name as yet. That is.....

Rao : Das.

The friar pointing towards Rao : This is.....This is.....

Das : Mr. Rao.

Heiler got up and said : And that is (pointing towards the friar) Fr. Alfred Webber.

Rao, a bit jokingly, said : Now we know who is who. We need not now go to a whose who almanack. Should we ?

Heiler : A whose who almanack gives but names and touches but the fringe of what our hearts long to know. What is the use of knowing your name or family relations if I do not know your deeper self, your inner personality, your ideals and your aspirations ?

Rao : True, we should break the ice and delve into each other's personality. In fact, it is the ideals and aspirations that really make a man. It is true that the greatest number of men and women are deceived by names and forms—which we call in India *namarupa*—and merely by seeing the external appearance. The dress, banking accounts, physical beauty etc. are the criteria for them to judge human beings. But I have always thought that it is the thoughts and ideals that constitute personality.

MAYA AND SATYA (Appearance and Reality)

Mrs. Heiler : How true. I have read in Xeanaphon's *Memorabilia Socratis* the description of that wisest Athenian. Externally Socrates was ugly, with thick lips and features embodying sensuality and stupidity. His dress was odd, his ways and manners might have repulsed young girls and boys whose only passions and dream are love-beauty and beauty-love. I have been

reading the "Prophets of Modern India" by Romain Rolland, and I guess that the appearance and manners of Sri Ramakrishna might not have appealed to many fashion-mongers and love-dreamers of either sex. Yet, Ramakrishna was the living embodiment of divine truth, beauty and love. Today you still have in your ancient land that Mahatma whose dress and appearance are like that of the lowliest of the low. His protruding ears and thin limbs may not attract many beauty-love-intoxicated youth. Yet, he is the Mahatma alive today. Isaiah, while prophesying about the Messiah, who had to come and redeem his people, says : "No beauty is in him, no form and we did not consider him. He is a man wounded and deformed, a Man of Sorrows". Whatever be the prophetic value of that masterly description, there is no doubt that Jesus, the Lord of Sacrifice, was without form or beauty while mounting Calvary, truly a man of sorrows. Yet Jesus remains still a sign-post for this fear-haunted and death-ridden humanity. For, the Christian belief in the divinity of Christ is the same as that you Hindus believe in *Avatara*, or the embodiment of divine goodness and love in the life and teachings of a given prophet. Yes, how true is the distinction between name and form and the Inner Reality !

Das : Appearance and reality ! All that glitters is not gold. When I was in India I had at random deceived myself and others by mere external glamour. I am an experimentalist, and I am going to tell you one of those experiments I made to discriminate reality from appearance. But I hope I won't tire you by relating my experiments with appearance and reality, and reality—not Bradley's metaphysical appearance and reality, of course—.

Dr. Heiler : No, not at all. It's a pleasure. Go ahead telling us about your experiments. Everything will prove helpful to them who have a reflecting mind.

Das : When I was last in Calcutta I approached one of the biggest business magnates in India, clad in my simple pyjamas with no button, neither ironed nor washed. My hair was not combed. While seeking for an interview, I gave my bare name, leaving aside the academic qualifications and professional titles. After pleading for half an hour with his secretary I managed to enter his office room. He looked at me from feet up to my head, and, before I started speaking, he said. "What do you want me to do for you ? I have no time.....No time, no time." Saying this he rang the bell to call in the next visitor. I insisted : "But please listen to me. I must have your help now. Please.....Or

can I call at your house, or at any other place where you like, and at your convenient time ?

Mr. X: No, I have no time. No time. Good-bye.

Those who entered Mr. X's office before and after me were men in ironed suits, with clean shave and perfumed hair oil on their head. They all looked like *pukka* businessmen and "gentlemen", whereas my appearance was that of an outcast. Mr. X was entertaining them with tea and a kind of inferiority complex and a sense of appeasement and business-minded slavery were revealed in his words and behaviour. So, I hit upon the right plan.

After a few weeks I put on the best of my English suits, with oriental perfumes and French brillantine on my hair, with a walking stick, with a fashionable glass, and doctor's cap. I hired a car for fifteen rupees. As I drove in the porter, and later on, the secretary to Mr. X came and showed me the way in.

"Your name please" ? the secretary asked me.

In a very serious mood I answered : Dr. B. M. Das, lecturer in Philosophy in the University of Oxford. I have just arrived and would like to interview Mr. X.

In a minute I was introduced to Mr. X. I excelled him already in my dress and fashion, with my golden watch more precious than his, and my perfect Oxford accent compared to his rather Bengalicized English. I spoke about some business firms which "might be sold" ! X's business mind became more and more enticed. He invited me to lunch and I kept the appointment. Then I remembered the saying of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount : "If you love them who love you, what reward have you ? Do not even the publicans do the same ? Or if you salute your brethren only, what do you do more than the others. Do not even the publicans do so ? Be ye therefore perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect". (Matt. V. 46—48)

After a week I went up to Mr. X's place for dinner. But then I wore but a simple *dhoti* and just a scarf hanging around my neck. I wore just a pair of sandals worth two rupees with the copies of the Upanishads, the Coran and the Bible in my bag. Mr. X seeing me in that condition, felt rather humiliated and approached me and said : "are you become mad ? Don't you know that we have distinguished guests here ? Please go and dress yourself properly and then come back. Or come inside, I can lend you one of my suits. If you enter like this it will be an insult to me, nor I can let you in to join us in this

way. The happy party will be rendered unhappy by your mad presence". So saying he was about to turn me out, as he knew from my deliberate attitude that I was not going to dance to his tunes. Then I said, then I sang, from the depths of my heart :

Big man, they say, you are, and yet by dress
 As if a fish by the bait you are caught.
 "Speak, and let me know thereby who you are",
 Was once said by a sage of ancient Greece.
 How eternally true is that saying, O how true !
 Big you may be, but not certainly great,
 For greatness consists in mind and heart alone,
 Not in money, body, possessions or pleasures.
 For years long have I gone in quest of a great man,
 Except in books and stories I have found none as yet.
 Until I experiment Gandhiji I cannot say whether really
he is such

As that what men make of him, for error and folly is so much
 In this world. But a certain intimation I have
 Which tells me clearly that Mahatmaji is really great.
 Now, ere I part, a friendly warning I would give.
 O give up your folly great ere by the world you are given up,
 Before you reach the brim of an eternal pit-fall,
 An unfathomable abyss, whence you may never rise again.
 Think, brother, think, for thought is life and power,
 Be not enslaved by your money and possessions great,
 But rather make them serve you and your ideals high.
 Of the immortal heritage of India you are an heir too,
 Don't mock your human dignity, awake, be vigilant, awake.

Mr. X approached me nearer and asked in a very angry mood :
 Have you come here to teach me ? Get out, you dirty wretch.
 So saying Mr. X called one of his servants and expelled me from
 his house, from his premisses..

Heiler : How interesting ! But mind you, Mr. Das, these
 are so common cases and the more we watch, analyse and ex-
 perience life the more we realize the vacuum of so many men
 considered to be big and great ! myself have had many experiences
 of this kind in my personal and professional life. The vast majority
 of mankind are nothing but fools, who struggle and strive and
 achieve nothing, eat and drink and dance and eddy about and die,
 die out like the spray in the middle of the sea that foams and

dances for a minute, and is blown down in the next moment and vanishes. Is that not true, (turning towards Subhas Chandra) Mr. Bose ? What is your mind ?

Subhas : Profoundly true. All that are big are not always great, nor all that are great are always big. They say that Marshall Stalin, Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt form the "big threes". They are indeed big. But where to find the "great threes" ? As Mr. Das was telling us about his experience with Mr. X, it occurred to my mind what had befallen Swami Vivevakanda who, as a young man, sought for some job to support himself and his poor family. In vain he sought for a job as he met with refusal everywhere, although a prophetic genius was burning within his heart. The world apparently seems to ignore the few thoughtful and prophetic minds. Yes, I know only too well the difference, nay the heaven-wide gulf, that exists between what is great and what is big.

Webber : Nothing truer than what you say, Mr. Bose. Do you know how St. Paul had expressed the same ideas which you are now describing ? Listen :

"For so it pleased the Almighty to choose foolish things,
To knock down the wise ones of this world ;
Weaklings has He chosen to confound the mighty ones,
Base and despised things has been chosen, nay things that are not,
To refute the things that are.

Rao : Yes, I remember to have read it somewhere in the New Testament. Where is it from ?

Webber : I quoted from the 1st Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 1st, vers. 27 & 28.

Subhas, turning towards Webber, with a gentle smile : Two verses above that, I mean 25th verse of 1st chapter of the 1st to the Corinthians, will translate and convey my idea clearer. There Saul of Tarsus says : The foolishness of God is wisdom unto men, the weakness of God is strength unto men.

Mrs. Heiler : You have struck at the right note, Mr. Bose. Truly worldly wisdom is divine folly and divine wisdom is folly to the worldly-minded. How true ! Do we not find it confirmed in our daily life ? Everywhere and at all times ?

Das : The *vidya* of the sages and *rishies* is *avidya* to the worldly-minded and the *vidya* of the worldly men is *avidya* to the seers and saints of history. What a grand truth, needing no proof but attentive observation and deep reflection upon our daily experience !

RELIGION AND POLITICS

Dr. Heiler : Here comes in the great personality of Mahatma Gandhi. As Romain Rolland said, Gandhi is a man who has become one with All and, consequently, has become a Mahatma. But, tell me, Subas Chandra, why did he not keep off from politics as was done by Socrates, Jesus and Buddha, who were perhaps the greatest religious prophets known to history ?

Subhas : That is strictly a personal affair and Gandhiji is the right man to answer it. But, as far as I am aware of, Gandhiji believes that there is not any compartmental division between politics and religion, both being parts of the same Truth. He had written somewhere : My devotion to truth has brought me into the field of politics. Elsewhere he has written that religion is politics, politics is religion, and that, in his opinion, Jesus was the greatest politician of his day.

My personal opinion is that Gandhiji would have done better if he had either given himself up to a teacher's call or would have stripped himself off his politician's garb. History painfully teaches us that these two cannot be associated in one and the same individual without wrecking the one and the other—I mean both the politician's and the preacher's work. Although I love his ideal of *Satyagraha* and *Ahimsa*, I cannot endorse his applied religion in politics and applied politics in religion. Bitter experiences have brought me to the conclusion, which thinkers like Machiavelli, John Baptista Vico, Card. Gibbons and others had arrived at, that politics or state-government and the gospel of salvation form two different fields, and one cannot overstep into the other.

Webber : I too think so. We have always drawn the border lines between religion and politics. The Church, on the whole, has stood for this distinction between religion and politics. We say with the founder of Christianity : Render unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and unto God that which belongs to God.

Subhas : In the Middle Ages, of course, when the Church was the State and the State was the Church, that was the case. When, under the impact of Renaissance and Reformation, the Church became separated from the State, the gulf between the one and other began to widen, until the theory of "a free Church in a free State" was formulated. The frequent rupture between the State and the Church persisted, and as long as there is conflict between a political church and a secular state, these conflicts are bound

to increase. The recent instance of this clash between the interests of the Church and the State is the happenings in Germany between the Nazi State and the Papal Nuncio in Berlin, the biggest since the days of Bismarck.

The more I think, the more convinced I am that religion, primarily and essentially, is a personal affair and cannot be a part and parcel of the State machinery. But the State may defend the existing religions, provided freedom of worship and freedom to hold any religious opinions are not detrimental to the common good. It is part of that democratic freedom which the State should grant to both individuals and societies, whether religious or otherwise, existing within the State. But I have always agreed to that famous saying attributed to Jesus: Render unto Caesar the things that belong to Caesar, and unto God the things of God. Nothing truer than that.

PROBLEMS AWAITING SOLUTION

Dr. Heiler: I would very much like to ask Mr. Bose what are the immediate problems awaiting solution in India today? Do you know the reason why I ask this question? I have always held that Mahatma Gandhi is the greatest spiritual force in India today. But as I draw a clear-cut distinction between religion which is essentially individualistic, and politics which is essentially based upon the mass psychology, I maintain, that Gandhiji would have fulfilled his mission better by restricting himself to purely religious and social works, without meddling with politics. Now the other great personality in India today is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who is one of the outstanding exponents of twentieth century Socialism, which is the gospel of our age. But he is still under the spell of Mahatmaji, and I find him half way between religion and politics. He is swinging between the celestial world of Gandhian idealism and the hard economico-political realities of Marx-Engels Socialism. I think that with such a divided mind and loyalty Pandit Nehru may not achieve very much. But you stand on the opposite pole to Gandhiji, because, as far as I understand your writings, your speeches and your activities and the whole spirit of that brave Forward Block, I conclude that you are out and out a politician. Yet not a shallow politician with no idealistic background, but a hard-tried man who is straining every nerve to bring the practical dreams and hard realities of every day life in India as near as possible

to the ideal. I must confess that I am now sitting in front of the most outstanding politician of India today.

Subhas : You are showering flattery upon me. But for my part, I must gainsay what you have said regarding me that I am the outstanding and foremost figure in the Indian political scene today. I am just a drop in the great sea of India's humanity, still a negligible drop in the ocean of this world Humanity. I am nothing more. I am not a leader, I am just a servant of fourty crores of India's millions. I consider myself to be the last among the least sons and daughters of my country. The personality of a Gandhi, or of a Nehru, towers far above me, and I am eclipsed in their presence.

As regards the immediate problems awaiting solution in India today, the first is the formation of a strong central Government, as totalitarian and as all-controlling as possible. It is precisely here that India has to learn more from Germany, Japan, Italy and the Soviet Union rather than from Britain or America. When India reaches the present height of British public opinion and economic well-being, then we may indulge in the parliamentary debates and talks on democracy and grant complete individual freedom. We need today that supreme sacrifice, voluntary if possible, compulsory if necessary, of those few free thinking minds, who form and lead parties and factions in India, to bring them all under one iron rod, so that the great masses of the Indian people may be saved. Everything else follows from India's unity. The curse of illiteracy and grinding poverty, the equi-distribution of India's wealth among her working class people—for the world is today of the working class and the old Capitalist system is in agony—the abolition of enforced forms of inequality, the artificial barriers between creeds and castes in India, the abolition of the Zamindari system, and the mediæval feudal relics in the form of the Indian Princes etc., are to be undertaken with an iron rod. And we mean to achieve all these within the shortest time possible, and with the least agony of a revolution, which we envisage at the initial stages of creating a free and strong India. Her manpower and material resources will be so organized as to ensure the greatest possible happiness and security to the greatest possible number of the Indian citizens. Once India is freed from foreign control, she will never be subject to any other country for centuries to come. Her past experiences under foreign heels have been far too bitter for her to let any other foreign power to prey upon her

body, soul and mind any longer. Our past lessons will not be forgotten, even after enjoying a century of political freedom.

Webber : I wonder how India would look like when she is well armed to the teeth. Even without much armament, a free India will be the terror of other Asiatic countries with the exception of China. She could then subdue all the Asiatic countries, if she would. What do you think about that, Subhas Bose ?

Subhas : Of all the modern countries, India knows better the psychology of political subjection, and I dare say, that there will never come a time when India will dominate others. No sooner the Italian unity was achieved in 1870 than she began to dream of imperialist expansion. To my way of thinking, India will be the last country to exercise dominion over any other country. No land need be afraid of a free India. Her freedom means emancipation for all the subject countries of the earth. Her freedom means resurrection of Asia and Africa, the two continents that fell victims to the white man's burden, the crucified continents of modern history. I believe that the East has still enough spiritual energy left to sift what is really worthwhile from the multi-prismal phases of the western civilization, and graft them on to our cultural heritage, enhancing it, impregnating it. I repeat, India will be the last country to strike terror in the heart of any neighbouring or distant country.

Webber : Do you mind, Mr. Bose, if I ask you another question which has been worrying me for long ? I value your judgement very much. Do please enlighten me regarding this point. India is struggling for her freedom and you are the living symbol of that Indian struggle. But what are you going to do with her religious problem ? The Hindu-Moslem tension is there. You don't mind me asking you, do you ? Because it's a delicate and difficult problem, the question of conversion of India. Do you think that India will be converted to Christianity ? The Church has been working there for many centuries, nay, for millennia, if the traditions of the Malabar Christians are to be believed. I do hope, I have not hurt your feelings, Mr. Bose, by asking you a question, which, I know, is really too delicate and difficult both for asking and answering.

Subhas : No, I do not mind it in the least. I shall answer the two questions as frankly and clearly as I can. The Hindu-Moslem problem does exist today. The seeds were sown by the British *divide-et-impera* policy, systematically pursued in

India. The Communal Award was the culminating point in their imperial policy, consistently pursued from Whitehall. There are communal leaders in India who would dance according to that tune which strengthened the British imperial policy. Communalism grew rampant, and the division between the Congress and the League became a *fait accompli*. The League finally, in its Lahore Resolution, went even to the extent as to demand a separate State, called Pakistan (etymologically it means the land of the pure, the holy land of the Moslems). The Indian Civil Service and all the British vested interests rallied behind that clamour. The League Leader, once a strong Congressman, became intoxicated with power-thirst and the communal tension persisted. If the British continue to pull the strings behind the scenes, there is also the threat of a civil war. But this so-called civil war will not last long. Once the third party in power is withdrawn, we will settle our problems by ourselves, even if it were to entail blood-baptism. The price is never too much. But as long as the British are in the saddle, communal tangle will become more and more fatal to both Hindus and Moslems, and it will be the British who will share the dividend out of the Indian blood. Most Britishers in India are Leaguers.

ROLE OF CRISTIANITY IN INDIA

Regarding your second question, the mission work for the Christianization of our country, I regret to say that we do not need, nor we support, any conversion made by the Christian missionaries. We do not need any Church forms of Christianity, because there is hardly any church today in India that has got the heart to understand and assimilate our cultural heritage. They all stand miles away, or better, at antipodes, from what is the quintessence of what St. Paul preached as his gospel of "Jesus and him crucified." I must admit that among the Catholic missionaries there are many selfless and devoted workers, and they are glory both to the Church and to the country they have adopted. But that is no apologetics for the Church to continue to do the work she has been doing, viz. relabelling of the poverty-stricken and the ignorant men and women of our country. You may ask within yourself: Did not Jesus say that he came to evangelize the poor? Yes, he did. But the spirit of Jesus Christ and the heart of so many so-called Christians are two different things, if not diametrically opposed to each other. The Christian

West crucified both Christ and Christ-like men. Christ-likeness is the only criterion to judge who is a Christian and who is not.

But that does not mean that India has closed all her doors to the West. On the contrary, she has all her portals open to everything that is really worthwhile in the western civilization, and we will gladly accept the needful from you, not only in the field of Science and Industry but also in Religion. But we do not need any relabelling. Let us all try to live up to the ideal, and when one is truly a Hindu, and truly a Christian, and truly a follower of the ideal of the Coran, we will all meet on the common platform and will speak the same language.

Webber: Do you mean to say that all religions in their essence in one? That the core of every religious life is one?

Subhs: Yes I do mean that. Now listen:

ALL RELIGIONS BASICALLY ONE

Religions are many, but Religion is one; men are many, but Man is one; all are One, although all are or seem to be many.

In our religious pilgrimage we all have different start, one from Mecca, another from Rome, a third one from Benares and a fourth from Jerusalem. But if we are strong and determined enough to go all the way in the spiritual adventure we have embarked upon, we are bound to reach the same destination, God-consciousness or Self-realization.

The beginning of our religious life is rather childish, mainly based upon sense-evidence of the external world and the authority of an established religion. We start off like little children. Most of us do not make any progress, but linger, faint and die uninitiated at this first stage of our religious life. We are not mentally regenerated nor spiritually re-orientated in order that we may become partakers of the kingdom of God.

The second stage which only few people reach, and fewer still have the guts and will-power to hold on to, is the land of wilderness, that painful journey along the arid desert sands of scepticism, agnosticism, sense-bound materialism and other "ism" abstractions, which land our souls in a desert of constant agony and pain, of wavering and dejection, of weakness and distress. Many mystics have called this stage the "dark night of the soul". Many a giant mind have stumbled and have returned back broken reeds, at this stage, to the life of the world or *samsara*, whence they came. They abandon the pursuits and, being unable to see or reach the yonder

shore of existence, they fall back, back to the worldly life. It is here that our souls feel a sense of utter loneliness, and although God's unseen hands are guiding and propping us up, the separation-sense exists, and the treshold of peace and bliss, which follows God-realization, lies far away, far removed from us. It is at this second stage that we dwell on the verge of tergiversation, easily drawn to either side of the opposites, without ever laying hold on to the solid rock of salvation, easily swinging to and fro by every tide, by every wind, dancing according to every tune, every song, played to our ears. There are, of course, some passing moments when we glimpse into the unfathomable depths of the spiritual reality, and we feel cheered, strengthened and our faith gets corroborated, well-fortified. There are other moments when we are "choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Luc. VIII. 14). A constant state of tug-of-war is going on between the idealism of self-realization and materialism of sense-enjoyments.

This second stage which is characterized by incessant struggles, by repeated failures and a general sense of frustration-complex, could easily be observed and studied in those few representative types of humanity, in prophets like Buddha, Jesus and Muhammed, in mystics like St. Augustine, St. Theresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, in the contemporary spiritual leaders like Gandhi, Tagore, Sadu Sunder Singh and Aurobindo Ghose, in modern reformers like Leo Tolstoy, George Tyrrell and Kagawa. There is no need to go to history; each one can experimentally know this truth for oneself. After all, religion is super-eminently a matter of personal, direct and immediate experience.

Men who have had once experienced the awakening of the religious consciousness, who have once had the relish of spiritual reality inborn in them, the tension between the spirit and the flesh become ever-growingly intense, vividly conscious and increasingly acute. St. Paul experienced this antagonism between the law of the flesh and the law of the mind, because to him was granted the grace "to be caught up into the paradise and hear unspeakable words, which are not given to mortals to describe" (I. Cor. XII. 4). Once we have shifted the emphasis of religion from an external authority to inner experience, whatever be the claims and proofs for the divine foundation of that external authority, we have no other guide along our pilgrimage

but our reason and conscience, our inner light, our God-whispering within. This is a very risky journey. We have become independent, men of character and mental vigour by freely and consciously stepping out of the arc of salvation, be it an established church or any constituted authority, and leaping into the profound deep of the shoreless sea of life. No wonder, then, that we find ourselves to be tiny barges without a rudder or a mask, and often on the verge of being capsized and drowned, until, through conscious suffering, self-purification and self-sacrifice, we find ourselves worthy receptacles of God's ineffable grace, which is the inexhaustible source of strength and light for a pilgrim's progress. Our solitary journey continues until we have met the pilot of our souls, never more to part from us, ever-present to guide us on, on to the shores of infinity and eternity of life divine, unfolding within us, the source of ever-increasing light and vigour in our minds. We have not deflected from the noble path and we are found worthy of that peace and bliss which "passeth all understanding", the joy of God-consciousness.

When after a long and arduous journey one has reached the harbour of Self-realization, his entire outlook on life is substantially changed. All that is big is no longer great. The standard of judgement becomes different. Values come in and matter disappears. What we read in history, and is echoed to our ears from tradition, bequeathed to us from our forefathers, about the distinction between the first-born and the twice-born, is no longer mere words we have memorized and repeat parrot-wise, but it becomes a profound reality, a consciously-felt experience, running deep into the very marrow of our bones, into the inner recesses of our hearts. A man is thus re-born and is resurrected. The price of resurrection is crucifixion, which, in psychological terms, means self-sacrifice to attain self-realization. To give up the physical man who is the victim of old age, disease and death is the price we have to pay to gain God-consciousness. Pay that price and ineffable joy and bliss of God-realization are yours. Mirabai, the princess of Rajaputana of the fifteenth century, sang thus about the final stage of God-realization we reach, when we have paid its due.

"Kanu have I bought, the price he asked I paid :

Some cry "too great", while others jeer, "it is small",

I paid the price in full, weighed to the utmost grain,

My love, my life, myself, my all".

When one has reached God-realization it is not world-denial,

but world-affirmation that characterizes his life. In other words, solid and real God-realization has nothing in common with what many students of comparative religion and savants of philosophy of religion call "world-denying religions." Certainly every form of religious experience is based upon some form of idealist approach towards life. The higher the idealism the deeper the religious experience. So teachers like Buddha, Jesus, Plato, Socrates, Lao-tze and Sankara were the greatest idealists history has known. It is only the idealist philosophy that equates reality with spirituality, spirituality with reality. But religious idealism is not a denial of the sense-bound world, but an affirmation and fulfilment thereof. So, the implication of God-realized life in all the social, political and economical problems of the day may vary according to the historical background of a particular saint or a prophet. In so far as all the saints attained God-realization, they have all spoken a common language : in so far as they have had different historical background, different traditions and social environments, they have had a different message to give to the world, imprinting the uniqueness of their personality. Hence, although a historian may see a great difference between the Semitic and the Aryan religions, for a mystic, there is hardly any difference whatsoever, as far as the central truth and core of religious experience are concerned. The difference that exists is mainly due to the different angles of approach towards life and not in the destination of our religious pilgrimage. A Semite with his dualism, and an Aryan with his monistic approach, reach the same goal although the former calls it "God-consciousness" and the latter "Self-realization". But the Self with capital S, and God of the Semitic group of religions, stand for one and same Reality. Dio, Dios, Deus, Deva, Allah, Elohim, Eternal Substance, Great unknown, etc. are all different words, connoting one and the same Reality, towards which every genuine religious consciousness is focussed.

Once we reach that vonder shore of Existence, we see every-
sub specie aeternitatis. "Verily, then, a wife and sons are not dear, wealth, cattle, *kshatriya* caste, the worlds, devas, nor vedas are dear that you may love them, but that you love the Self, therefore they are dear. Varily creatures are not dear that you may love the creatures, but that you may love the Self, therefore everything is dear" (Brihadarnayaka Upanished. IV. V. 6). Then there is not the slightest word-denial, but world-illumination, world-acceptance and life-affirmation, but not any longer with the eye-sight of the

first-born but with the insight of the twice-born, not with the lust of those born of flesh and blood, but with the love of those who are born "not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John. I. 18).

These three stages of our spiritual life are clearly traced in the general history of religious thought and in the biographical or outo-biographical sketch of every great saint or seer. In the first stage of our spiritual life we are sense-bound positivists. We accept this world as final and ourselves we set at the centre of the world. Hence we are selfish and consequently miserable, because selfishness and misery go hand in hand. But at some stage of our life the angel of death, dejection, depression or despondency strike us down and we are brought to our senses, and we start reflecting. Instinct within us is blind and the unconscious within us ; whereas reflection and reasoning are conscious forces within us. In the second stage the struggle is between what is blindly unconscious and what is enlightening consciousness within us. Consciousness is co-extensive with reasoning, as the blind unconscious life within us is co-extensive with our sense-boundedness. Human reason subservient to sense is destructive ; but when it is subject and subservient to the super-conscious life in man, reason is constructive and redeeming. Religious experience, at its best, is the reaching to the super-conscious level in faith, living an unwavering and intuitive faith. To reach that plane of religious faith is to reach God or Self-realization.

The core of religious experience, then, is the eternal, immortal and unshaken rock or bed-rock of Reality, on which human nature is built. A physiologist or even a psycho-analyst may not see that ; but a man who has gone all the way through the path of self-crucifixion, and has consequently reached resurrection or Self-realization, will see the plain truth that man is not merely flesh and blood but is essentially a living soul, a monad emanating from the Life of lives and Soul and souls, the Immortal One embodied in every mortal frame. "Let's eat and drink, for, tomorrow we die", is the philosophy accessible to the child. But experience grows and calm reflection broods over the events of history and the life-story of oneself begins to ripen, it becomes lucidly clear, that our physical death is nothing but the casting off of the frail vessel by the Eternal Man within us. *Non omnis moriar*, becomes an experienced truth. God and His kingdom lie within us. God is the core and impelling energy of all our quests and

strivings, until through thought-power we enter the plane of superconsciousness which is the plane of faith. Through living faith we attain God, the rock-bottom whence we are all dug out. The circle is now complete. We come from God and consciously we reach God. We start as children and we are spiritually reborn as children of God again. "Unless you are converted and become like little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of God", says Jesus. We all must be born again.

In this world of increasing agitation, ever-growing frustration, and superficiality of thought, inherent in this atomic age, in the dark and terrible ordeals of *Kali Yuga*, may it be left to the few seekers after the Truth that is Reality, Reality that is God, those few who choose to enter the narrow and strait path of God-vision and God-realization, to free themselves and help thereby the suffering and agonizing mankind. While we face many known and unforeseen trials and perils confronting the human family, we are to look back to our glorious heritage, the best in every civilisation, and build up that kingdom of vision and light, to approach nearer to the divine utopia. That is God-vision, God-relish, God-realization, which is not only the goal of our religious pilgrimage, but also the very substance and subsistence, the essence and core, of every religious experience. Mysticism is the concentrated essence of religion, the kernel without the shell, the substance without the shadow, the highest form of human experience granted to mortals on this planet. In agitated days like ours, let us not forget the mine of spiritual heritage and immortal treasures of human civilisation necessary not only for our personal peace, bliss and enlightenment, but also for the right understanding, and evaluation of world events of the contemporaneous history.

SUBHAS BIDDING GOOD-BYE TO REV. WEBBER

When Subhas finished speaking on religion both the Heilers and the Rev. Webber were so astounded that for a few minutes they did not speak anything. They all sat quiet for some time reflecting. That was a wonderful scene when the apparently violent Indian revolutionary spoke gently and quietly about the deeper realities of religion, which silenced even the ministers of religion. A bewildering paradox !

The time was nearing 8 P.M. when the abbey bell was rung. The friars assembled in the choir and began to sing the

mattins for the next day. It was getting too late for all of them to leave the place and return home.

Dr. Heiler, before bidding good-bye to Subhas Chandra said: During these couple of hours I have learnt much more than I could have learnt in two months. I am so happy to have met you, Subhas Chandra, who, under your politician's garb, veil a hidden personality, perhaps as great as Hitler dreaming in those brave, and daring ideals of a totalitarian State, great as Gandhiji in his spiritual understanding and inner realization, great as Stalin in that real Socialist passion and love of the working class, all synthesized in one single personality.

Das turning towards Heiler with a smile: And a poet too, perhaps as great as Tagore. Because we heard verses flowing in an irresistible flow, some time ago, before you joined us under the tree.

Dr. Heiler: What a pity! I have missed it. But I hope this is not the last time we meet. For I would very much like to see you again and learn much more from you.

Subhas: What have you to learn from me? You are a professor of philosophy and I am always prepared to sit at the feet of philosophers. Philosopher means a lover of wisdom, and in this world there is nothing greater nor more divine than wisdom. God is Wisdom and *Saraswati* is the beloved daughter of God. You know how these metaphors sometimes convey our ideas and feelings better than cold, arid and rationalist phrases. As Jesus! is the son of God or the *Logos* of the Neoplatonists, so *Sarswati* is the daughter of the Indian poets. Perhaps I am now telling you something which will make you laugh.

Mrs. Heiler: O no, Mr. Bose. We are charmed, we are grateful. We only hope we could meet you at some other time and discourse about the fundamental truths regarding religion, philosophy and practical politics.

The Rev. Webber was gratefully fascinated, and he declared his willingness to sit under the feet of those spiritual minds and guides as Ramakrishna, if only he could really find one during his earthly pilgrimage. Subhas thanked Webber for his kindness and they took leave of each other. Subhas, Das and Rao drove back home at about 9 P.M. Thus the first scene at Berchestegaden is brought to a close.

CHAPTER III

HEART OF HINDUISM

PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

During the short sojourn of Subhas at Berchtesgaden there were a few intellectuals and practical politicians who used to go and discuss various topics with him. A few disciples of Paul Deussen, the well-known German orientalist, went up to Subhas and discussed on the six systems of Indian philosophy. The experimental knowledge of yoga which Subhas began to acquire even from the early age of seventeen when, as an enthusiastic admirer of Swami Vivekananda, he braved to go and practice religion in the solitudes of the Himalayas, was of much help to his listeners. Some orthodox Lutherans and Catholics were rather hurt to hear from Subhas that the various religions were but different roads to the same goal. The heterodox and liberal group joined Subhas in proclaiming from the housetops that men reach at unity on the deeper levels of religious consciousness. The great religions of history have taught us substantially the same redeeming message. Differences and divisions, in the name of religion, exist only on the surface.

The talks gradually began to assume the form of heated controversies between the votaries of stereotyped religions of the past and the champions of the progressive, dynamic and psychological religions on the other.

A certain Mr. Breitingger, who was a great follower and friend of Rhys Davids, the great authority on Buddhism in the West, also joined in the controversy. The heated controversy continued for days until it was unanimously agreed that they should assemble together in a hall and state their respective views. Complete freedom was given to the speakers to state clearly and frankly their innermost convictions about their respective religions, and examine whether religions, deeply lived and intelligently approached, do not lead men to unity rather than to division.

Breitingger was the organizer of the meeting. Speakers were invited from the Catholic, Lutheran, Unitarian and other groups of Christianity. Breitingger himself undertook to speak on Buddhism. On hearing the news, Subhas humorously asked Breitingger: Are you going to convene a kind of parliament of religions—

in miniature of course—as the one held in America, in September 1893 when Vivekananda shined as the brightest star ?

Breitinger : Yes, Subhas. What I suggest is to hold a free parliament of religions on the American model, when, I feel confident, you will be the Vivekananda of the day.

Subhas : Don't blesheme by comparing me with the greatest and the most dynamic religious prophet of modern India. His throne has remained vecant since the year 1902, and it will be a presumption on my part to reoccupy that.

Finally Subhas agreed to speak on Hinduism.

In a large hall they gathered. Due to the war conditions some of the invitees from Berlin could not arrive in time. Various speakers began to appear on the platform. Subhas, like Vivekananda, was plunged in thought.

On the second day after Miss. Margaret Shiller spoke on Jainism, the Chairman called upon Subhas Chandra to address the audience on Hinduism.

THE LAW OF RELIGIOUS EVOLUTION

Subhas got up and, admidst cheers, of the enthusiastic listeners, began : Rabindranath Tagore says :

The final freedom of spirit which India aspires after has a character of realization. It is beyond all limits of personality, divested of all moral or aesthetic distinctions ; it is the pure consciousness of Being, the ultimate reality, which has an infinite illumination of bliss. Though science brings our thoughts to the utmost limit of mind's territory, it cannot transcend its own creation made of harmony of logical symbols. In it the chick has come out of its shell, but not out of the definition of its own chickenhood. But in India it has been said by the yogi that through an intensive process of concentration and quietude our consciousness does reach that infinity where knowledge ceases to be knowledge, subject and object become one—a state of existence that cannot be difined—Tagore (the Religion of Man pp. 192-193).

The history of religious thought reveals a slow, steady process of gradual evolution and emancipation of the human spirit from the limitations and bonds of creation. The triumphant march of human progress, and the history of progressive forces that are at work in making known Man to men, have smitten to death all the contending parties, proclaiming the once-for-all revealed

law, the survival of the fittest. Creation must necessarily entail struggle, victory and defeat, life and death, good and evil, light and darkness, with this difference that victory, life, good, light and so forth, are the positive realities of life, whereas death, evil, pain, and suffering are the negative aspects, and are not final. The final vision of human existence is a supreme Yes, an act of affirmation, a hope-inspiring and light-enkindling optimism.

But the weapons of a civilized man in his struggle for existence are by no means bombing planes, battleships and machine guns ; they are the weapons of the primitive man, the uncivilized, the lower man, the giant bordering the animal kingdom. Human life is rightly compared to a battlefield, a constant warfare, an incessant struggling, but not with the brutal force of arms, but with the soul-force to win his spiritual combat. A vulgar man cannot see beyond his immediate present, and he is in bondage by the ties and limitations of his *hic et nunc* circumstances. He cannot picture any ideal before his mind ; he is tied down, he is bound, a bonds slave. Man is the ideal personification of all that is best and greatest in men, and even our God is nothing but the co-equating term for the highest ideal of Man.

It is after millions of years of struggle for existence that the tiny *homo sapiens* appeared on our planet and, although he is but an infinitesimal part in the whole creation, he became the lord and power on this earth. Although he is but a reed, by the power of his thought he became the sovereign lord and the undisputed master over everything visible and invisible on earth. If this self-exaltation raised him to the level of gods, his self-abjection brought him down to the level of the lowly among the lowliest, humble among the humblest, poor among poorest. Man is lowlier, humbler, and poorer than many species of the animal kingdom ; but he is overlording the animal kingdom and all worlds by the splendour and majesty of his thought. He is a "thinking reed", as Pascal says.

In this ceaseless flow of Humanity's tidal waves, the human spirit manifests and expresses itself in manifold ways. There is Art, there is Science, there is Philosophy, there is Religion where man has stamped and engraved his image in the pages of human history, in the heart of humanity at large. Many nations and various races build different parts, but the temple that is finally raised is one, by the Eternal Man to the Eternal God. Man is

there were God is ; God is there were man is, the one being the correlative of the other, the one complementary to the other.

We know there will come a time when the entire humanity will be effaced from the face of the earth. Cold or heat, a cataclysm or catastrophe that will bring about the tragedy, we can only dimly surmise ; but in the very law of evolution is contained the germ of decay and death. Humanity must die. Will then Man be gone and dead with the to-be-dead humanity ?

Man persists even when all men are washed away by another flood, or burned down by another fire from heaven, or by a word-wide earthquake. But Man cannot die, because Spirit is the Ultimate Reality, and Man is co-equal sharer of that Spirit. He becomes immortal and eternal by participating in that Spirit.

What does the ancient civilization of Greece, Rome, India, Egypt, China, Persia and other countries tell us in a nutshell but this perpetual striving of men towards the ideal, Man ? God Himself is the highest peak where human vision can soar to while contemplating the ideal of Man, of that Man who is co-equal and consubstantial with God !

Does this offend you ? But you and I are worms and nothing more. I am not Man, but one among the many men, crawling miserably on this earth. Who is more conscious of our limitations than we ourselves ? Yet in all our misery and all-sided limitations, there are moments when we glimpse into the ideal, the personification of all that is greatest and noblest in us, which, later on, we call God, the Absolute, the Unknowable. But we could not have known the Unknowable, if the Unknowable Himself had not made Himself known to us. In the realm of the Spirit the knower and the known, the affirmer and the affirmed are at one, for the spirit cannot be two. The Human spirit and the divine cannot really be two beings, but one and the same Reality, viewed as a whole or a part thereof.

In this ever-changing and onward-moving world it is absolutely necessary that man affirm his Self, and in affirming he realizes his Self. But many do not realize the Eternal Self of the Whole ; and hence the justification of the perpetual dualism of the infinite God and the finite man, the immortal God and the mortal man, the sinless God and the sinful man. In the history of the descent and growth of man on this earth there is a race, a people, a country, where this deepest Self of man has been seen, affirmed and realized in a way quite unique, in a way quite unpre-

cedented and unsucceeded in the annals of human history, Greece and Rome, on which is based the whole of the Western civilization, were comparatively younger sisters when compared to that country where the blending of the ancient Indo-Aryans with the Dravidians formed the cradle of the Indian thought, the happy spot where the Unrevealed Self became clearly revealed, the Unmanifest became consciously manifest. Even in so remote times, not only in philosophy and religion, but in art, politics and other fields of human life, ancient Indians become precursors and pioneers to many of their Aryan sister-nations of the West.

Dubois says: It is impossible to doubt for a moment that science and art flourished amongst these nations at an epoch when our most civilized countries of the West were still plunged in the dark abyss of ignorance. The various forms of their institutions, both political and social, their knowledge of mathematics, especially of astronomy; their system of metaphysics and ethics: all of these have long ago made the people of India famous far beyond their own borders; while the renown of Hindu philosophers had reached even Europe.—Abbè J. A. Dubois (Preface to his "Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies").

What is it that makes Hinduism a living religion of our century, a religion that has survived the rise and fall of many a mighty empire, of many a religious sect and system? What formed the kernel of Indian thought and religion is the solid bed-rock of the Vedanta and the Yoga systems. The mind and heart of man are brought to a harmony. A poise between the finite and the infinite ran ever since Indian thought took its definite and living shape in the Upanishadic period. Since that time Indian mind has always rallied on the side of divine Eternity and changeless Reality, the Absolute.

THE VEDANTA IN A NUTSHELL

The Vedanta does not imply any book-bound doctrine, any authoritatively imposed dogma. It means the perception and realization of the Self by the self of man. It is not a matter of belief; it is a thing to be realized; not a creed to be imposed, but a vision to be had and enjoyed. Against the stagnant immutability of dogmas, against the death-knell-sound of authoritative definitions, stands the vitality of a living inspiration, the never-ending flow of the Infinite through the channels

of the finite, enabling the finite to realize its deeper roots that go and touch the very infinity of God. It is a soul-vision accompanied by Self-realization. It is a looking beyond one's tiny self and his empirical realities, to the shoreless ocean of the Spirit. There one finds and realizes one's identity with the Whole, the filling of the vacant throne with the splendour and majesty of the Infinite. A man who has become one with the Infinite is an infinite Man, the Ideal, God, the All-in-all. It is this infinite ideal of Man that becomes the perpetual source of strength and attraction for a man to look beyond the immediate present and to realize his self in the infinite Self of the universe. There is no "thus far and no further" in religion, for the simple reason that religion is a persuing and practising of the infinite ideal, which in some way or other, is to be realized by the religious soul. There are no visible shores, because the ocean of life which a religious soul leaps into, and swims in, is simply infinite.

It was a slow, but a logical, development of Indian thought that from the spiritual childhood revealed in the Rigveda, Indian idealism reached its climax, its definite system of thought, at the time when the first Upanishads were composed. The Creation Hymn in the tenth book of the Rigveda reveals the hidden inquietude of the human spirit for not having seen the Infinite, to be realized within one's own soul. Men, proficient in arts and all forms of state craft, after having experienced all that life can promise or offer, had to enter into the infinite world that lies within, and find therein an adequate answer to the challenge of the cosmic forces outside, and to the call of the spiritual beauty shining from within. At last they said: Truth is one, although the wise called it by different names—*Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*.

India has not given pre-eminence to statesmen, warriors, scientists and inventors; but she has always revered and honoured sages, saints, the *rishis* of all times. Indian civilization has not its centre and circumference in big cities and towns. The real place where Indian soul reached the infinity and eternity of God was in the forests, in the solitary jungles and caves. But that is not the place for humanity, it is but the arsenal wherein are prepared and preserved the materials for the spiritual combat, for man's realization of his Self. When the Anglo-Saxon immigration took place towards America's fertile lands and extensive planes, the forests and Jungles were hindrances to their way of conceiving civilization. If the ancient Indo-Aryans worshipped and loved the

sheltering shade and solitary caves in the forests and jungles, the Western colonists in America cleared them off, and built up their city-civilization. City-civilization must necessarily be limited and must centre around things, whereas jungle and forest-civilization, of its very nature, must be without walls and without a visible horizon ; for the panorama is infinite and the vision thereof. Saints and *rishis* of India delivered a message which has continued to circulate through the nerves and veins of religious India. Does not the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda version of the Vedanta show that, even in our century, the backbone of Indian thought and religion has still got such an amount of adaptability, fluidity and life-giving vigour that the God-realizing factor is still very powerful in the land of the Hindus ? Here and here alone lies the hope of resurrection of Indian thought and philosophy which can serve as a leavening power to this benighted world. In all great religions there lies hidden a divine spark, which when kindled, when the pure unalloyed God-realizing element in religion begins to emit its radiant rays, there dawns the re-birth of spiritual life once again.

Not a statesman, but a *rishi*, not a scholar but a seer, not a soldier but a saint is enthroned in the heart of India as the ideal. Who is this *rishi* or sage who is the loftiest ideal loved, cherished and worshipped in India ? The *rishis* in India are they "who having attained the supreme soul in knowledge, were filled with wisdom, and having found Him in union with the soul, were in perfect harmony with the inner self ; they having realised Him in the heart were free from all selfish desires, and having experienced Him in all the activities of the world, had attained calmness. The *rishis* were they who having reached the supreme God from all sides had found abiding peace, had become united with All, had entered into the life of the universe"—Tagore R. (Sadhana, P. 14).

Nowhere in the world was the nature of the human soul and the Real Self so minutely analysed, so profoundly explained, and so fully realized as in India. Notwithstanding many unhappy and inglorious vicissitudes and epochs in Indian history, this vision and realization of the Self has been her vital strength, her guiding star, her supreme pride. When the active man of the West revealed his greatness in his own sphere, India did not play deaf and dumb ; but, having the undercurrents of the Vedanta-light, India could easily and logically adapt herself to the new surroundings created by an intimate and direct contact with the western Science and European civilization. Are not the reform movements like the

Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission, Theosophical Society, Shantiniketan, renewal of the Ashram life, and the awakening of the radical political parties, but an eloquent reply to them who still prate about the "Unchanging East" and the "Immovable India" ?

The introduction and full display of the Western life into the soil of India had its own perils and dangers. But dangers and perils are the very prerequisites for all progressive movements, for all great human achievements in the history of mankind. I know in some parts of India and in certain political circles, a greater stress has been laid on things than on values, to machine-civilization than to spiritual ideals. But India as a whole has kept her soul untouched, and the ancient wisdom transmitted to us by the rishis and sages is still the stronghold and the hope of a fully re-organized, politically emancipated and spiritually purified India. You cannot go beyond the highest ideal of Reality and Life contained and implied in the two great systems of the Indian thought, viz. the Vedānta and the Yoga, because it is not granted to many human minds to soar higher than that. There is the final vision and realization of the Ultimate Reality.

The spirit within us is in continual agitation until it finds unity and harmony with everything that lies within its range of vision and experience. In everything that we do or act a vague and undefined sense of infinity and eternity accompanies us everywhere. It is this vaguely-felt infinity and eternity that are positive realities to our spirit, as the finite time and space are the tangible realities of our sensuous nature. Death is a tangible reality, but negative ; what is really implied in a positive way, even while facing the mystery of death, is the life beyond. That is why we seldom think of death, this black monster that will bite every being born on earth, at any moment. India's eyes had always been directed to the positive aspect of the Inner Reality and of our earthly pilgrimage. A philosophy that is supereminently positive in its ideal and vision, by its very nature, is optimistic and hope-inspiring. Those people who still think that Indian Philosophy is essentially pessimistic seen use to the terms entirely in a different sense.

Indian thought starts from a supreme affirmation, an eternal Yes, an eternal "I AM". Appearance and Reality, what it seems to us and what is in reality, the phenomenal and the noumenal aspects of Reality : here is the fundamental problem for Indian mind. It admits appearance and, consequently, all systems of religious

thought and philosophical inquiries that start from, or end at, the time-space-bound world, the objects of our daily experience, are proclaimed to be valid. Although the Vedanta flies higher and far beyond the daily happenings of our life, it does not bar its doors within the range of its higher vision, but fosters and caters for different levels of spiritual growth, for all mental developments and for the immense variety of religious experience in men.

All those who from the outer rind have penetrated into the kernel of Indian thought must realize that optimism and a supreme act of affirmation, not pessimism and an act of denial, is at the background of Indian thought and Indian philosophy. Hardwick, in his "Christ and other Masters", Vol. I, Page 355, says that "the great boon conferred by the Gospel, in contradistinction to the false systems of the Hindus, is the recognition of man's responsible free agency and the permanence of his personality. 'Not to be' is the melaucholic result of the religion and philosophy of the Hindus". I know a great many Hindus are superstitious, weak-minded, melancholic; but that does not alter the truth that the philosophy and religion raised by the Hindus is one among the greatest and loftiest systems ever recorded in the pages of human history. Now let us briefly consider what Hinduism can contribute towards achieving the God-realizing religion of man, earnestly sought after, and invoked for, by the present-day humanity.

One of the characteristic features of Hinduism, in its higher levels of the Vedanta and Yoga, is the fact that it is not a book-bound religion. The distinction between the *Smṛiti* or the revealed, and the *Śruti* or the traditional, scriptures is limited to the theological schools. The Hindus accepted the scriptures only in so far as they helped to reveal God unto them: but the revelation itself is an internal process by which our limitations are transcended by the vision and touch of the infinite. It is God who is working within our souls to cast off the smoke that over-clouds the real nature of our being, enabling us to contemplate and receive the light, majesty and divinity of Man.

Pure Vedanta starts by saying that knowledge is the only way to bliss and Self-realization. Ignorance about our Real Being is the cause of all our miseries; our separation from that Eternal Being is the root-cause of our ever-recurrent births and deaths. The ignorance or *avidya* is intimately associated with taking as real what is only a passing flux of things in the universe, which is *maya*. But once we are freed from the darkness of ignorance in which

we are drowned, our souls shine in their natural beauty and greatness. The object of religion is no other than to lead men from the limitations of the empirical self to the limitless liberty and splendour of the emancipation of the Real Self that is already in us.

"The spirit is smothered, as it were, by ignorance, but as soon as ignorance is destroyed, the spirit shines forth, like the sun when released from clouds. After the soul, afflicted by ignorance, has been purified by knowledge, knowledge disappears; as the seed or berry of the Kataka after it has purified water. Like an image in a dream, the world is troubled by love, hatred, and other poisons. So long as the dream lasts, the image appears to be real; but on awakening it vanishes"—Sankarācharya's Atma Bodha.

To us who are spiritually asleep, and hence awake to the material world, the vision of the Vedānta may seem a beautiful castle in the air to be contemplated and admired at, but with no real foundation to build up a system of philosophy and religion for the masses. There are certain moments of dejection in our life when we are completely left abandoned by all who used to be of some help or support to us, when friends in a moment have been turned into foes, when praise and applause of yesterday are turned into a cry from the multitude: "shoot him", "hang him", "away with him"; when the sweet-smiling face, which perhaps for years cheered our hearts and gave meaning and strength to our life, has turned her face away from us, when in a moment we find ourselves with ourselves, alone and alone. It is then that we see our real misery on the one side, and the infinite capacity of human heart on the other. The civilized life we are obliged to lead today is such that only a few can reflect even for a day or two in a week, an hour or two in a day, on the real weakness and strength of their own souls, of their own inner empire. We switch on the electric light that dispels darkness, lest, face to face with the dark message of night, we may enter into ourselves and be renewed. We have not dominated, but we have been dominated by the machine civilization of the day. We have the wireless sets in our rooms. The wireless, gramophone and the television sets alone can bring the whole world in a miniature into our rooms. If we have some spare time, we go to dance, to the café, to the pictures, to the theatre, so that the whole day we are engaged in things which are entirely outside the ken of self-knowledge, self-purification and the consequent Self-realization. When this has become the general rule, it becomes absolutely necessary to bring

into some systematic whole the practical life of the unthinking many, through some system of philosophy, or religion. We have to go to those seers and sages of the ancient and eternal wisdom, to those men who have helped men to form Man out of the common clay, and gods out of brutes.

They who have taught us that outside God there is neither true joy nor real happiness, were men themselves immersed in the affairs of life, and, after having learnt its impermanency and insufficiency, come out freed from the net, which ignorance and illusion had cast over them, and taught a weary world that salvation consists not in sinking deeper into our ignorance and inventing means, and seeking for arguments from all quarters to justify them, but in looking into themselves, and abiding by the saving faith that is born from self-knowledge, the beginning of all self-realizing religions of history.

HINDUISM—A PSYCHOLOGICAL RELIGION

There is no going back from the immutable and eternal shores of psychological religion, the theatre of all its play and development being the heart of Man. The difference between the romances we read in books and the love-story played in the hearts of boys and girls, is that which exists between the religion contained in the scriptures and the religion that is realized in human hearts. Books may be accepted and revered only in so far as they are instruments and help for the religious life in the hearts of men. Our orthodox dogmatists in many religions, including Hinduism, assert that man must conform to the so-called revealed scriptures. The truth is that not only the revealed books, but also the revealing prophets have worth and value only in so far as they concord with our deepest sense and inner voice, which alone is the supreme court of appeal and the infallible oracle of God within us. Away, then, with this servility in worshipping books and prophets, but let us make scriptures and prophets as means, as a help for a purpose, for an ideal, that is to be realized within us, and only by us. Redemption or auto-emancipation is strictly a personal affair, by which a person realizes his fullest personality, a personality which transcending the limits of reason, launches into the limitless depths of the sea, into mystery of life. From our tiny self we expand ourselves, as it were, to our friends and family and other dear ones, from there to the entire community, from communalism to cosmopolitanism, from the love of world to the

vision and realization of the infinite, which is the highest ideal or vision which religion or philosophy can ever give us.

Now what are the implications of those immortal principles that form the basis of the Vedanta Philosophy? As Vivekananda had said in his address at the Parliament of religions held in Chicago, by Vedas we do not mean any book or books, but the sum total of experiences we have acquired about God and human truths. The Vedanta is therefore a living and ever-flowing inspiration, not a dead letter of any book or scripture. The message of the Vedanta, in different forms and versions, is lasting, because as long as the human nature is governed by the psychological laws, as we know them, there cannot be any other experience, nor any other vision, of the Ultimate Reality, for the saints and sages of all countries, and in all times. The Vedanta, holding its ground on the highest possible ideal man can ever conceive, still leaves room and an open door for lower minds and still undeveloped hearts among us. If God is absolute, He is also personal. If God is infinite, He is also finite. In the same way we say that if the sun rises, it does not rise, or if the earth is round, it is also flat. For one thing is Science, quite a different thing is the daily experience of the common man. It is therefore a comprehensive vision of the whole, a vision of all in their totality, in the highest way human mind can approach or conceive it. Vedanta is essentially a vision of the soul, not an acceptance of any divinely revealed book; it is a living realization, not an externally imputed justice; it is an inner renewal and purification, not a holding together of some dogmas and creeds.

You may ask me: Are not the beliefs in the all-in-allness of God, in the transmigration of the soul, in the absolute identity of our self with the Divine Self etc. the immutable dogmas of the Vedanta Philosophy? Similarly the Yoga system is strictly controlled by the aphorisms of Patanjali. How then do you give these whimsical interpretations which are only your own personal ideas and not a true picture of the Ideals and vision of the orthodox Vedanta?

Well, I confess, I am not attempting to tell you what is meant by the Vedanta by this authority or by that; I only want to know what living message has the Vedanta for me, and how it corresponds to my own inner needs and can soothe my inner pangs and pains. There is an Aristotelian dictum that says: whatever is received is received according to the mental

disposition of the receiver. The Vedanta or any comprehensive vision of Truth and Reality are not to be presented in the crystallized forms of dogmas and creeds, in any closed form of books or prophets, because it is a living inspiration, always fresh and life-giving, precisely because it is freed from the trammels and taints of dogmatism and creedalism. Yet the human language and human phrases must try to convey that idea, and as long as those expressions convey and describe that experience, that living vision of the self-subsistent Reality, they have a certain significance. But the ideas about God-experience are not to be imprisoned within those formulae.

The Vedanta Sutras, then, can be a guide and a norm, to build up a system of philosophical thought and religion. But our philosophical thought and religious realization are not to be imprisoned within the boundaries of the Vedanta Sutras or the commentary of Sankaracharya or any other interpreter. Delimitations of the infinite God are the scriptures; but God transcends those scriptural meshes. Manifestation and fulfilment of the Divinity already in man is religion; unfolding of the infinite perfection that is already inlaid in man is religious realization.

The epitome of all Vedanta is this: "All this universe indeed is Brahman; from Him does it proceed; into Him it is dissolved; in Him it breathes. So let every one adore Him calmly"—(Chandogya Upanishad, III, 14). Advaita, or non-dualistic Vedanta, has its *raison d'être* in the highest idealism lived and realized by men. Outside that idealist world Vedanta is but a "dream of a visionary", as the material-minded people say. The Absolute, the Lord alone is the Real: everything else is unreal; and our Real Being is one with the Absolute. Or as the greatest of the Advaita Vedantists, Sankarācharya says: Brahman is truth the world is false, the spirit is Brahman only and not any other—*Brahma satyam Jagam mithya jivo brahmaiva nāparah*.

Although the Vedanta put forward in its crude form may seem strange and extremely mystical to an average Western mind, I feel certain that the deeper levels of the Western civilization and thought are not far removed from that Indian idealism, the apex of which is our Vedanta Philosophy. It is because of its idealistic background that even dualistic or modified monistic interpretations can live in peace and harmony with the advaita or non-dualistic vision of Reality of the Vedanta.

The East and the West are closely knit in one spirit and the link between them is idealism, the higher truth, the supreme vision of the Imortal Man by mortal men.

After all, in the last analysis, we know only ourselves and the modifications of the thinking subject. The rivalry then is not to comprehend the totality of things as they are in themselves, but to attain the best possible mental state from which the best possible vision and inspiration could be engendered, nurtured and enkindled. We do not know God as He is in Himself, except when we ourselves really become one with the Father of the universe. Even if we were to have a glance and vision of God, it is rather difficult, nay impossible, to convey our knowledge to others, especially to the masses. But they who have been favoured by the divine vision of the Vedanta know that Spirit is all, whence sprang forth the whole creation, which is relative, apparent, and hence unreal and shadowy.

CREATOR AND CREATION

"To discover the Maker and Father of this universe is difficult, and when He has been discovered, it is impossible to describe him to the multitude. According to which of two patterns did he frame the world? According to one subsisting for ever the same? Or according to one which was produced? Since, then, this universe is beautiful and its Artificer good, he evidently looked in modelling it to an eternal pattern" (Plato, *Timaeus*).

God is the Ultimate Reality, the Universal Spirit, "that from which the production of this universe results" (2nd Aphorism of Badarayana's Vedanta Sutra). As everything else in this world is the manifestation and irradiation of that Supreme Light that is God, it follows that the very creation is nothing but the permanence of the law of cause and effect in the realm of the relative world. Strictly speaking, God is not the cause of anything on earth below or in heaven above, because cause and effect and other categories of human thought have validity and justification only in the world of relativity, not in the Absolute, where the distinction between cause and effect, good and evil, are all transcended. Does then God evaporate into something gaseous or imaginary or become an empty phrase? "Not this", "Not that", *neti*, is then the only word we can say. As the ether, sky, and space penetrate and interpenetrate everything and everywhere, although anything and everywhere is, neither ether, electron nor space, so the Lord of the Universe is

everywhere and in everything, although everything and everywhere is not the Lord. The Buddhists call that state of mind, wherein lies the highest degree of supreme possible bliss, *sunnyata*. It is nothing to us who are revolving around nothingness, for outside God everything else is nothing or next to nothing. But the vacuum or nothingness that is attributed to God is infinitely distant from the vacuum or nothingness that is at the root of creation. On that which proceeds from God is based the root of infinity in creation ; on that the creatures are in themselves is based the root of finiteness and, consequently, of our utter poverty and nothingness. That Upanishadic *neti*, that Buddhistic *sunnyata*, that Lucretian *Inane*, is the infinite, pervading and sustaining all.

"And yet all things are not on all sides held and jammed together in close and solid parts ; there is a space in things", says Lucretius.

"Nec tamen undique corporea stipata tenentur

Omnia natura ; namque est in rebus inane"—Lucretius 1.330

Although the same God reflects through the sun, moon and the stars, through the pupil of an eye or through the burning of the fire, through the smile or beauty of a child, we know He is in our soul, the central principle of creation, where He is reflected, where the ineffable essence of the Creator is seen and realized. This soul of ours, though apparently many individual souls, or *Jivatmas*, in reality, cannot be any other than the Eternal, the One without a second, the Supreme Soul, the *paramatma*. But none reaches such a state of mental vision, unless he or she has cleansed his or her heart from all spots and stains, and has attained tranquility and vision in the Infinite.

Creation then, is not a "*productio rei ex nihilo sui et subjecti*", as the orthodox theologians of the Semitic religions assert, but it is a voluntary, apparant self-limitation of the Absolute. It is, as it were, over-clouding, or smoke-screening around the Eternal, and creation exists only in our finite-consciousness. It is just like a precious stone or gold immersed in dust or dirt and looks black and dirty ; but on removing the dirt, the real gem or gold will acquire its lustre and shine in its true nature. That is what happens with ourselves. Our real Self is divine, and cannot be but divine, for the Spirit is one, and that is at the root of the whole creation, but different layers of crust and rust are enveloping it, and we falsely imagine and identify ourselves with the finite creation. But God really cannot be changed to any of the apparent manifestations

in the universe ; it is our surface layers of consciousness that make us feel and see us separated from the Life of the Whole, which separation is the root-cause of all human miseries and sufferings.

God is not really changed into creatures, but our limited knowledge of the empirical world make us feel and act as though we were really separate from the life of the Whole, God. The Vedanta attempts to bring back to the reminiscence of each individual his divine nature, which is without birth and death, without limits or boundaries, without sufferings or pains. It is not something that is bestowed from without by the grace of God or by the jurisdiction of men ; but it is a discovery or re-discovery of the Real Man that is already in men. It is a vision and realization of the Divinity immanent, but encrusted, within us. The removal of the rust and fog and dirt that envelop our Real Nature is achieved through the principles of self-knowledge, self-control, etc. about which a system of philosophy grew up in a very elaborate and masterly form in India, under the name of Yoga. The heart of a yogin cannot exist without the mind of a Vedantist ; and the mind of a Vedantist cannot be integrated without the heart of a yogin. Both are complementary to one another, both aiming at the vision and realization of the Lord, one and identical with the Real Self of man.

Creation is eternal ; but it is a free act of God, the self-supporting and self-sufficient Being. In the infinite there cannot be but freedom and the fulness of freedom. Necessity and laws are in the realm of the finite. But once we transcend these limitations, which cannot be done except through the awakening of the lion of God asleep within us, then the mortal is no more mortal, the finite is no more finite, the sensible world is no more sensible ; for in seeing and realizing the infinite, the vision of the finite world automatically disappears and vanishes. Have we not had ourselves those blessed moments when, by degrees, the whole range of the visible creation with men, cities, love and hatred, war-news and political speeches, ambitions and passions, motor-cars and telephones, have all been emptied out of our mind, memory and hearts, when the great Lord of the universe has knocked at our heart, when our spirit gradually opens its doors and windows to the rushing flood of the infinite light, of the infinite bliss, transcending beyond all other joys which the earth can bestow. It is a pure intellectual vision, an intellectual delight, a spiritual realization of the Infinite, ineffable light that is already in man.

"Light intellectual, full of burning love,
Love of the very good, full of delight,
Delight which far transcends all human sweetness"

"Luce intellectual, piena d'amore,
Amore di vero ben, pien di letizia ;

Letizia, che trascende ogni dolore" (Dante, Divine
Comedy, Paradiso. XXX. 40-42),

Religion is essentially a matter of personal experience, which is the basic core of revelation, inspiration, of all dogmas, creeds and everything that go by the name of an organized or systematic religion. Religion is a living experience of the soul touching the heights of the infinity and eternity of God. Religious realization is attained outside the limitations of time and space. Our thoughts are still measured by the time-space-bound world ; but when it reaches that region where Divinity is seen, touched and realized, a man, during those blessed moments, is freed from the servitude of creation, which all "groaneth and travaileth", as was said by St. Paul. This is a constant yearning, thirsting of the finite towards the infinite, and this constitutes the proof of our creatureliness, the basis of our religious organizations and religious truths. But there cannot be truths without Truth, just as there cannot be men without Man, of whom all different men are the images and feeble copies. The perfection of men consists in striving to be nearer and nearer to that Ideal Man, the pattern, the prototype, ever accessible to and realizable by the human mind.

God is not outside His creation, but is inside it, working in it, through it, so that the creatures may realize the Creator. It is a working of God, not mine, a poor worm crawling in this vast universe ; it is a gift of God, not yours, a miserable man like anybody else ; an enlightenment from God, not flowers and fruits grown in our own gardens. But it is a God not distant nor distinct from your Real Self, whom to see and realize is directed the eternal message of the Vedanta.

Perhaps your logical and university-trained minds may object and ask : How is it possible that from an infinite God come forth the finite creation ? From a pure, living God, impure and dead creation arise ? From an all-wise and all-merciful God spring gangsters, criminals, sinners, scoundrels and cruel tyrants ?

It is tantamount to asking : How is it that the living body issues forth dead and semi-living parts as the nail, hair and so forth ? Cooked rice that we take is not living and is generally

classed among the dead matter, and yet living blood and living tissues are all formed from the food we take in. Or, if all is sea why should there be foam, waves, billows, spray and bubbles? Now the fact is that the Lord is all these; but only few subtle minds with cleansed hearts can ever soar to such a height of vision and spiritual realization. What is human soul in the living body, that is the Spirit in the universe. It is the whole in the whole universe, whole in very part of the world. The sustainer of the entire creation is the Lord of our hearts, and everything evolves from, and revolves around, this mighty ocean of existence "I AM". The sun does not rise without the will and leave of this "I AM". Men do not love and hate without the leave and permission of this "I AM". Even a single hair does not fall from the head without the leave and permission of this mighty "I AM". There is no other God higher than this "I AM"; none greater than this "I AM", and the realization of "I AM" is the highest pitch where religion can lead us to. The Vedanta is the only philosophical system in the world that has come forward and has shown mankind the highest vision of God, of man and the universe, higher than which neither in Greece, nor in China, neither in Rome nor in Germany will one seek in vain to discover a system. The eternal vitality of the Vedanta is the great fact that you can experience it, and all its assertions or assumptions are fully verifiable.

What is a blasphemy, a heresy, a sin from the standpoint of many dogmatic orthodoxies in religion, that is the very substance and life for many God-seers. Al-Hallaj was burnt because he said "I am God". Jesus was condemned by the Jewish orthodoxy, because "He made himself equal to God". This is the converging point in all the God-realizing religions whether they are grouped under the Semitic dualism or under the Aryan monism.

The Vedanta and the Yoga are essentially psychological, not book-bound, religious. The Vedanta says :

"I, like the boundless ether, permeate
The universe within, without, abiding
Always, for ever similar in all,
Perfect, immovable, without affection,
Existence, knowledge, undivided bliss,
Without a second, One, supreme am I.
The perfect consciousness that 'I am Brahma'

Removes the false appearance projected
 By ignorance, just as elixir sickness—
 The universal soul knows no distinction
 Of knower, knowledge, object to be known" (Sankara's
 Atma Bhoda).

These and other thoughts from the Vedantic philosophy needs no scriptural proofs, authoritative definitions, to prove its truth and value in the life of God-realizing souls. Their only proof is the direct experience, and the approach is more psychological rather than metaphysical and scriptural. Metaphysics and scriptures have value only in so far as they concord with the personal experience of each religious soul. Whereas other systems stand for this or that vision of reality, the Vedanta alone stands for all visions of the different systems in totality, the vision of Man. If the Vedanta is monistic, it is also theistic; if it is theistic, it is also agnostic, and tolerates even atheism. It can tolerate not only atheism, but even gross materialism, because it can understand and even sympathize with all the prodigal children that have strayed from their heavenly mansions. As Hinduism is the all-embracing mother of all religions, so the Vedanta is the all-embracing mother of all forms of God-approach and God-realization.

But if all are God and God is all, why strive towards perfection? Where is liberty? The consequences seem to be strange and even ridiculous. "Of course the Vedanta theory, if pushed to its ultimate consequences, must lead to the neglect of all duties, religious and moral, of all activity, physical or intellectual, and of all self-culture. If everything be God, then you and I must be one. Why should any efforts be made for the advancement of self or for the good of others? Everything we have must be common property". These words were written by such a scholarly orientalist as Monier Williams, and are unintelligible or absurd for any modern Indian. For the Vedanta, as we understand it today, has little in common with that theory from which Monier Williams seems to deduce deplorable consequences.

First of all, the Vedanta is not a "theory"; it is a God-realizing reality in the lives of all truly religious souls under the sun. The Vedanta, even in earlier days, did not lead men to "the neglect of duties, religious and moral, of all activity physical or intellectual, and of all self-culture" (Indian Wisdom. P. 114). If all these neglecting took place it was precisely because the Vedanta, pushed

"to its ultimate consequences" was not rightly understood nor seriously taken by them. The Vedanta calls man to arouse himself from his lower stages of spiritual unfoldment and to reach the highest forms of spiritual vision and realization. It calls men to a divine life, an eminently divine life, to an infinite life.

The fluidity is there over the rock-bottom of the *advaita* Vedantism. Modern scientific achievements, far from invalidating the fundamental principles (but without no blot of fundamentalism which is needed to make religion a living reality, as it is the case with Vedanta and the mystical Christianity), tend only to strengthen them all the more. Once we understand our real nature, our Real Being, the infinite ocean that extends underneath our tiny mortal self, then we do not neglect our duties, "religious and moral, all activity, physical and intellectual and all self-culture"; but all these are done and accomplished in an infinitely superior way than it could be done without the aid of the Vedanta vision and realization. It is for this reason that some spiritual giants in history, a Jesus, a Buddha or a Mohammed, still remain the greatest leaders of religious humanity. The Vedanta "pushed to its ultimate consequences", far from being an obstacle, is the greatest aid in fulfilling our mission, our duties, social, religious and political. It is this dynamic aspect of the Vedanta that is at work and will continue to influence in this newly awakened India of the twentieth century.

The whole of Hinduism lives only for and because of the Vedanta and Yoga systems. Popular Hinduism, whether Sivite or Vishnuvite, is more or less on the same levels, if not still lower, as the many popular forms of Christianity in the West. But underneath all the official teaching and practices of the churches, and the dumb millions following them, there is the great mystical element in Christianity which will live for centuries to come.

But from this let none conclude that the Vedanta is as elastic as India rubber. If I am a monist, that does not hamper me from showing sympathy towards a theistic, agnostic or even atheistic interpretation of the universe. For me, my vision is clear, and hence I am a monist. But that does not impede me from loving another man who may happen to be a theist or an agnostic, for I can appreciate and understand his quest after truth. The fellowship is therefore to be sought in a common search after truth. A Vedantist's ideas on the realities of the world and of the Ultimate Reality are clear-cut, and well-phrased, and if fluidity and elasti-

city are there, it is only to fit that monistic view into the different gradations of our intellectual and moral life.

My consciousness that "I am" is but a shadow of the eternal "I AM" which I can not know and relish until I know that without it I shall be diseased and miserable. Our empirical consciousness is the smoke screen that veils the fire that is underneath. It is the duty of religion to lead us thither, where dwells the Lord of all, into that kingdom of God whence death, misery and every limitation are fled for ever.

The message of the Vedanta is the greatest gift India can offer to the world. The gospel of the Vedanta which the world awaits to receive is the inherent divinity of man, and the consequent indefinite progress of man towards the eternal ideal of God. This is not in any way exclusive to the Vedanta alone, for all other religions, in their God-realizing aspect, have preached and proclaimed the same doctrine to the world. Herein lies the sole criterion for discerning higher truths from the lower forms of religions. "The central dogma", says S. Radhakrishnan, "of all true religion is the possible perfection of man, his inherent divinity, the invisible solidarity of all beings with each other in the life of God"—(Kalki or the Future of Civilization, P. 68). All the sectarian and dividing elements in religion, whether in Hinduism or in other "ism", are gradually decaying; but the one common eternal element, that God-realizing factor, will not, cannot die out; for, that proceeds from God who is asleep within man; who, when awakened in our consciousness, becomes the pathway to bliss and happiness, holiness and self-realization within us.

Truth is not there when it is asserted that the Vedantism and Hindu religion are the greatest or highest system in the history of mankind. Pure Vedanta and unalloyed Yoga are not the highest systems of thought for religious realization, for, they need integration or interpretation from elsewhere. India could not have survived, and her culture and civilization could not have been transmitted to us, had she lacked in that capacity for absorbing, assimilating, all that is great and worthwhile in other parts of the world. Isolation from the rest of the world means suicide and death. There is no question of touch-me-not attitude for India, or for any other country in the world. Those countries who close themselves within their racial, national or religious walls are, sooner or later, destined to be wiped out from the pages of history. God is not in the pages of human history; He is beyond the ken of

strictly historical developments. It is not a historian who sees God, but a thinker enlivened and inspirited by faith. A historian has no right to deny God because of the plausible atheistic or agnostic arguments drawn from his daily experience in life ; he is allowed only to call the existence of God into doubt. As Alfred Loisy puts it : "The historian does not remove God from history ; but he never meets Him there".

LESSONS FROM PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.

It is faith corroborated by experience that says that people without history are also without God, for the working and manifestation of God in creation in history. Brute creation has no history and they have no God. God is the highest manifestation of the human spirit in the history of mankind. There is no other God greater than Man and the distance between Man and men is infinite. The ideal therefore that is before men is infinite, and it is this infinite ideal of Man that is presented before our mind which, when consciously realized, become the highest form of religion. Although Man expresses himself in the history of nations, men do not take advantage of, nor learn lessons from, the pages of history. Those who pursue the ideal of an infinite God, who is potentially within our own selves, are few, and it is their eyes that see God in the pages of history. What a terrible lesson that humanity, as a whole, remains deaf to the lessons and implications of history ! How true the epigram of Hegel that "we learn only from history that mankind learn nothing from history" !

There is no separate ideal for any country essentially different from that of humanity at large. All may contribute their respective share, as different articles to be sold in the world-market, but the ideal underlying all national contributions is one, the ideal of Man, of one common Humanity, the ideal of the Absolute, to be realized in our own lives, in the life of the society and of this Humanity.

When I contemplate the majesty of Man, all my national sentiments, all my racial pride, all exclusive claims and special prerogatives, all are eclipsed at the rise of the infinite splendour of the sun or son of Man. Cannot a Chinese, a Japanese, an Indian or a Negro be brought to that height of spiritual refinement and moral growth as any one belonging to the proud Nordic race of Germany or of the colour-bar fostering Anglo-Saxons ? I see before my eyes the ideal Man, being born from the blending and fusion of all cultures and civilizations of the world, from the meeting and mating

of human hearts. Towards that ideal the human family must march, if we are faithful to the law of progress, to the law of the survival of the fittest. I do not believe that there is an inherent or intrinsic superiority for any man due to the colour of the skin ; but I do believe in an inherent and intrinsic divinity hidden within every human soul, which could be developed from within under favourable external circumstances.

Can it be my heart that sings when I say that there are no cultures but only Culture, no religions, but only Religion, no men but only Man, no gods but only God, not many but only the Eternal One in this universe ? Or can it be but a mere dream of an isolated visionary when I behold nothing but unity behind the multiplicity, harmony behind the apparent disorder and disunity, eternity and immensity behind the time-space-bound limitations of our earthly existence ? If the Vedanta and the Yoga are gifts from the East to the West, then Music, Love, and Activity are gifts from the West to the East. Indian Vedanta and Yoga without that music, love, and dynamism from the West is only a half truth. Western life, displayed in love, music, and action, is still a half truth, until it is completed and integrated with the light of the East. I see the ideal Man in his infinity, and hence ineffable is my dream, my vision, about Man and Humanity.

At whose command, or at whose will, we have descended into this earth nobody knows. Generations come and go, infancy is rushing towards the bloom of youth, bloom of youth to the disfigurement and weakness of the old age and to the inevitable hour of death. We want to cling to those persons and things that filled our hearts with charm and poetry, but the inexorable law of separation calls us to obey the behests of Nature ; and, willy nilly, our hearts are bound from both sides. We are bound to the creation, for that is the lap whence we sprang and are nurtured, and it is towards that we ardently pine for, we ardently yearn after. On the other hand, the angel of Death has bound us, hands and feet together, and we are no more free. Those lovely meadows, snow-capped mountain peaks, raging waves of the blue oceans, those sweet-smelling flowers of the fields and the sweet-smiling children everywhere, the shining stars keeping vigilant guard over the sleeping children of men on earth, human achievements in history, science and art, all these together with the charm and rhythm of creation, proclaim that man is bound. It is at this juncture, when man feels that he is bound

on all side; that the gentle Kindly Light dawns on the horizon to emancipate him from all bonds.

What lies beyond physical death is veiled from the eyes of the mortals ; and that is doubly true when our hearts are intoxicated with the nectar and charm of life. Thisworldliness so absorbs our mind and soul that there is no room left for any thought of otherworldliness—otherworldliness, not as a place beyond this earth, another time after death—but otherworldliness, as meaning the immanent divinity in the transient creation, the eternal divinity in the temporal succession of things and events, the Eternal Man behind the coming and going of the mortals on the world-stage.

I know I shall not be left unchallenged if I assert that the West excels the East in many respects, whereas the East excels the West only in some points. But that should not be a justification for the West to look down upon the East, for, those few things in which the East supasses the West are the very quitesence of Religion and the cornerstones of the divine edifice of Man. Religion and Philosophy are essentially of the oriental man, as Politics, Industry, Science, dynamism and Love-Romance are the stones of the divine temple raised by the Western man. But underneath the distinctions between the Eastern man and the Western man, of the white man and the brown man, of an Englishman and the Chinaman, it is the ideal, the ideal of Man that lies at the bottom of all civilizations.

India is a hot country and her thought is generally hot and burning, which needs to be tempered, if you allow me to use the term, by a refreshing shampoo from the West. There is no salvation for India by isolating herself from the rest of the world. India's excessive and exaggerated form of individualism is to be tempered and strightened up by the social and democratic forces of the West. The caste-system, or a strong cohesion of the Hindus among themselves, is not a counterpart to the refined form of social living in the West.

Gandhiji says that "India's wisdom consists in unlearning what she had learnt in these last fifty years from the West." I can never understand how his personal and essentially individual opinions could be preached as a programme for the whole of awakening India. Notwithstanding my deep respect for his gigantic spirituality and his outstanding moral integrity, I have always had a suspicion that some articles of Gandhiji's creed are

detrimental to India, being sectarian and division-fostering. India is called upon to come to the front line in this industrial age, on pain of being excommunicated from, and dominated by, other advanced nations of the world. The path to God is a continuous march until we have reached God ourselves. We are in the world of history, and hence immersed in the world of *samsara*, not in contradistinction with, but in subordination to, the invisible world of Reality, the Absolute.

India as a whole would have continued to crouch in a kind of spiritual lethargy, had not the call from the West aroused her and made her known her special mission which is to bring about the harmony of thought and unity of mankind through religion. The hope of India's progress depends upon her capacity for further assimilation and absorption of everything that is great, noble, sublime and divine in the progressive history of other nations and peoples of the world. I am fully confident that this vitality for self-adaptation and capacity for absorption are so great and deep-rooted in the soul of India, that her past errors could be easily remedied, and her fondest hopes could be shortly realized.

I believe India has got a very great contribution to make towards giving the Ideal Man to humanity; but I also believe that such a message can never be given, nor be received, until India has found her equilibrium and bridging mission between the East and the West. Science and Industry are not to be blamed nor to be ostracized from India; only our free will and free heart are responsible for the crimes of the industrialized countries of the world. It is not in things, but in the use or abuse of things that virtue or vice consists. Human liberty is a potent factor to promote good in the life of nations and of the individuals. Yet how few men really use their liberty in the right direction!

"The age has come when all artificial fences are breaking down. Only that will survive which is basically consistent with the universal; while that which seeks safety in the out-of-the-way hole of the special will perish. The nursery of the infant should be secluded, its cradle safe. But the same seclusion, if continued after the infant has grown up, makes it weak in mind and body"—Tagore R. Letters to a Friend P. 98.)

HINDUISM THE MOTHER OF RELIGIONS

Hinduism is the mother of religions, because all men of all mental developments can find their spiritual home therein. It is not opposed to Christianity nor to Islam, because what is specific in both Christianity and Islam is there in the Vedanta in general terms. Its very generality and fluidity and non or anti-dogmatism is the very source of its survival, of its constant adaptation to the changing conditions and needs of men. Buddhism did not die out of India, but sank deep into the moral consciousness of Hinduism, and its assimilation and absorption by the soul of India bears admirable and lasting fruits even to our own days. Similarly when the Christian religion, in the Western garb, appeared on the scene, India did not remain silent nor indifferent, but absorbed and assimilated what is best and worthwhile in it. Modern religious reform movements in India are largely due to this meeting and mating of the Indian religion with the religious and political forces of the West.

Hinduism is the mother of religions, because it is not a book-bound religion. The religious literature of India is but an episode in the spiritual growth and development of the Indian people. What is predominant in the history of religious thought in India is not a straining and fencing of our minds to suit to the letter of any book, whether of the *sruti* or *smriti* group, but an expanding and a breaking through of our inner consciousness, to which the scriptures are subservient. There is no dividing line between orthodoxy and heterodoxy in India.

Hinduism is the mother of religions, because it is not a religion centering around a prophet. It does not owe its origin nor inspiration, nor authority to any exclusive individual prophet or messenger of God. Hinduism has not got its Buddha, Mohammad or Christ, because its universal message is the one transcending all Buddhas, Mohammads or Christs put together. Buddhas, Mohammads and Christs are but distinct waves on the surface of the same ocean of Life, and it is this ocean of Life Hinduism invites its devotees to turn their eyes to. It teaches that man is unto himself: his scripture, his revelation, his redemption and his Godhead, for there is no other God higher or greater than, distinct nor distant from, our Real Self, whom to reach, whom to see, whom to realize is the goal of every religion, whether Aryan or Semitic, Eastern or Western, whether of the white or of the black

racés. Hinduism goes directly to the kernel of religion, although there are many super-accretions and superstitions.

Hinduism is the mother of all religions, because there are no religious persecutions, inquisition tribunals and religious wars in her history. Exceptions confirm the general rule. But in many other religions exceptions have become the general rule. First of all, physical force and brutal methods are completely inadequate to meet the spiritual needs of men, and religion is the deepest spiritual need and urge of human hearts. Once the ideal is attained, man is no more man but Man. Because such an ideal is only a dream, never to be fully achieved in this life, it follows that religion is a constant striving after the ideal perfection of Man.

Truth, like love, cannot be enforced ; cannot be imprisoned, cannot be bottled up. Persecutions and afflictions serve only to sharpen the sword of truth more and more which, in the long run, struggling with the forces of darkness, must finally win. There is no forcing in Creation. All creatures continue their rhythmic dance and music in an ineffable harmony and sweetness, which only few among mortals can see and hear. Hinduism and her all-conquering daughter, Buddhism, are the two great religions that have not written their history with blood, have not stained their long record with inquisition tribunals, heresy-hunting officials and juridically-armed police forces. They had no need of these flimsy defences, because they appealed to each individual man to enter into himself and find truth and religion there, and there only. Scriptures and prophets are but aids and nothing more towards realizing our Humanity, that Divinity, that is already in us. "The kingdom of God is within you", says Jesus.

Truth, like love, is a joyous and spontaneous growth from within the heart of man. It grows and grows, untill, at a given point, the soul is filled with its radiance and light. Then a man becomes an apt instrument to fulfil God's designs, a channel for God's grace and light to flow into the heart of humanity, guiding, helping and stimulating the dumb millions to look at their ideal Man and realize Him inwardly.

Hinduism is the mother of religions, because it has got almost an infinite capacity for adaptation to the needs of men. This fluidity and vitality is derived from the fact that Hinduism is not an organized religion at all. Religious organisation is a contradiction in terms. It does not impose a uniform standard of judgement and creed for all men, but it starts from the very

assumption that mankind seeks after God at various levels, and has various starting-points. Hinduism may not be a God-realizing religion as it is believed and practised by the dumb millions all over the country ; but the God-realizing elements are there, and it is through them that the revival of Hinduism is to be brought about. These God-realizing forces are common to all religions, and their renewal or regeneration depends upon the appreciation and realization of these God-realizing elements. On them the resurrection of those dead religions will largely depend.

Hinduism is the mother of religions, because all the great prophets of history can find a place within her all-embracing arms. It is not a religion that pretends to extend its conquests through missionary enterprize, nor it safeguards its hold by juridical means and violent measures. Hinduism appeals directly to the innermost sense and conscience of men, without compelling them to accept anything on the sheer force of authority.

If there is a way of salvation through knowledge, there is also room for devotion. Juana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga and Hata Yoga cover all spheres of human efforts towards God-realization. Yoga is theistic, and the best specimens of religious lyrics have come out of the hearts of some of the Bhakta saints of all times, especially in the medieval India. If Hinduism is charged with the heresy of pantheism or idealistic monism, which branch of the Semitic religion can ignore some of the best types of theistic saints whom this "pantheistic religion" has produced all throughout her long record ? When I read some poems of Narsaiyo, Tukaram, Chaitanya, Mirabai, Ekanath, Kabir, Nanak and the long list of Indian saints I feel India's close relationship and intimate kinship with some great saints of the Western Christendom, saints like St. Francis of Assisi, St. Augustine, and St. Bernard of Clairveux, and other men of that school which stands for God-realization-ideal in religion.

THOUGHTS.

"O God most beautiful,
When life burns dim,
And death creeps swift upon me,
Thus may I still abide,
Head bound in adoration,
Frame shaken by the wonder of the presence,
Throat choked, eyes hotly bathed in tears,

For joy of Thee,
 O Thou most joyfull and most beautifull"— Mukund-
 mala (translation by M. K. Gandhi,
 "Songs From the Prison").

All that we see, all that lies beyond our sight, are manifestations of the Lord. He is All, we are nothing ; for He is the all-embracing One and we the all-impooverished many. When shall I be fully enlightened to contemplate thy face, thy ineffable beauty, in everything true, beautiful and lasting ?

Let not the limitations of nationalism, racialism and creedalism take hold of me, and let them not permit me to be separated from the communion with the Whole. Lord, when shall the fetters of my heart be torn asunder, and find my peace and bliss in everything true, beautiful and lasting in thy creation ?

I keep constant watch and prayerful remembrance of that inevitable moment when my tiny self, with raging thoughts and heavenly aspirations will be eclipsed. Death overtakes every mortal being, but humanity continues its glorious march. But what is the splendour of that Man who dies not even when the whole humanity will have finished its course on this planet, and have disappeared from the face of the earth ? But when shall I see thy gracious face, O Almighty Lord, and find my peace and bliss in everything that is true, beautiful and lasting ?

Lord great, O life of my life, Soul of my soul, lead me thither where I can fix my gaze upon the infinite majesty of the Son of Man, before whom our petty bickerings and divisions, walls and barriers, raised by the hands of mortals, are removed, when alone I can find my peace and bliss in everything that is true, beautiful and lasting !

My religion is no more Hinduism, Buddhism or Jainism or any other "ism", but that is my religion that enlivens and vivifies me from within, that links me up with all religions in one common fellowship of spirit, recognizing the central facts and truths in all the great religions ; but not an idle uniformity of beliefs and practices, but a unity within multiplicity, a harmony among the religions that are as man, as there are individuals, as many as there are races, as many as there are differences and visions among men and women.

Into that land of freedom, where thy love and truth reign supreme, there where the immortal spirit is freed from the bondage of flesh and blood, where ineffable peace, bliss and joy reign,

thither lead us, O Father of all nations, of all time and all eternity !

Asato ma sat gamaya ; tamaso ma jiotir gamaya ; mrityorma amritam gamaya—Lead us from untruth to Truth, from darkness unto Light, from death unto Immortality !

Let the day dawn, let the age come, when this Mankind will be knit together—and not torn asunder—by the bonds of true religion, by the religion of Love and Sacrifice, of inner freedom and ever-widening God-consciousness !

Men and women present here in this hall, in Garmany, in the world, unite to break down barriers and build bridges ! God-realized souls and truth-thirsty hearts, unite this war-battered, authority-ridden and fear-haunted mankind on the solid rock of Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man ! This is the call of the hour, the need of our age, the kernel-gospel of all religions.

May God Almighty deign to tend and foster that religion which will take us to Him and will cement good-will, cooperation and understanding between all nations, races and creeds of this beautiful earth !

THUS SPOKE SUBHAS CHANDRA

Thus spoke Subhas Chandra on Hinduism. Thus did Subhas Chandra portray and defend the quintessentials of the cultural heritage of India. Thus is written another glorious chapter in the annals of the Awakened India.

Breitinger then spoke, in a most interesting way, on that introspective type of Buddhism known as Zen, associated with the name of Bhodi Dharma on the third day. A French Catholic of the Modernist school, who was an intimate friend of both Alfred Loisy and George Tyrrell, spoke on progressive Catholicism.

These sessions resulted in a better understanding of, and a sympathetic approach towards, other religions. It was a marvellous achievement, although the bustle and chaos, the iron curtain and news censorship of those war years continued to keep the history of that parliament of religions closed in a conclave.

During the debates and discussions that followed many questions were put to Subhas on both political and religious problems in India and the world. Calmly, confidentially and gravely Subhas answered them all.

The words he uttered revealed such a deep understanding of the spiritual nature of man, and, at the same time, such a practical

and sympathetic understanding of the world, that even many university professors and priests of religion had much to learn from him.

An Indian student told Das after hearing Subhas : I was once a student of the Calcutta University. But now I feel sure that the University authorities, beginning from Dr. Syamma Prasad Mookerjee down to the last professor, should regenerate that great Educational Institution from within. Let men of vision and deep spiritual understanding, men and women who can psycho-analyze and psycho-synthesize human nature and history, be put at the helm of the University. With the regeneration of the Calcutta University is intimately connected the whole educational problem in India. We need such an environment that will enable the Indian youth to develop their latent forces, and will enable Mother India to give birth to not one Tagore or one Gandhi or one Radhakrishnan, but hundreds like them in every generation.

Subhas overhearing their conversation said : There will be a blooming future for India and the world if the educational system in India is so reorganized that not mere job-seeking but formation of Man is made the primary aim of University Education. I know, I feel it intuitively, that India can develop her enormous spiritual powerhouse and mobilize all her material resources so that a great, healthy, educated, fear-free and cultured nation may come out of the present subject, abject, poverty-stricken, illiteracy-rampant India. That should be the dream of every true educationalist in India.

Das : As the queen of Sabia went from the remotest corners of the world to hear the wisdom of Solomon, so should the Vice-chancellors of the universities go in search of real men of vision, who will guide the youth and enlighten them on higher truths of life, on Philosophy and Religion, as the ancient Rishis did in India, as Pythagoras and Socrates did in ancient Greece.

They continued their conversation all along their way back to their residence.

After the "parliament of Religions" was over, many western admirers of Subhas continued to call on him both at Berchtesgaden and later on in Berlin.

CHAPTER IV

UNDER THE STAR-LIT BERLIN SKIES

LILLEY MARLEN

The sky was clear. The moon was up. The busy streets of Berlin were getting quieter. Walking along the roads and streets one could hear now and then many military songs. Driving along Gesund Brunn, in the outskirts of Berlin, we found a group of Italian *bersaglieri* singing the Italian version of Lilley Marlen. They sang it so melodiously and with full of ambition and love that we stopped there to listen to the song. But, seeing us alighting, the soldiers stopped singing. We were three in the car, Mr. Das, Rao and a young German student who had joined Subhas in Berlin. We approached the soldiers and requested them to continue their song. As the Italian black shirts did not understand English, Mr. Das began to speak to them in their own language. They were not shy any longer and Signore Bernini, the *caporale* among them, began to sing and all others followed him in choir :

*Tutte le sere sotto quel fanal,
Presso la caserma ti stavo d'aspettar,
Anche stassera aspetteró e tutto il mondo scorderó
Con te Lilley Marlen.....Con te Lilley Marlen.
O trombatier stasera non suonar,
Una volt' ancora ti voglio salutar,
Addio piccina, dolc' amor,
Ti porteró, per sempre in cuor,
Con me Lilley Marlen.....Con me Lilley Marlen.
Quando nel fango debbo camminar,
Sotto il mio baccino mi sento vaccilar,
Che cosa mai sara di me, ma poi sorrido e penso a te,
A te Lilley Marlen.....a te Lilley Marlen.
Se chiudo gli occhi il viso tuo m'appar,
* Come quella sera nel cerchio del fanal,
Tutte le notti sogn'allor, di ritornar, di riposar
Con te Lilley Marlen.....con te Lilley Marlen.....*

Rao : The tune is celestial, and I guess the meaning too must be wonderful.

The German student : In the original—which as you know is German—it is more beautiful, and sweeter still. It's full of love, patriotism and heroism. There are many German soldiers who sing this song idealizing Germany in the form of a lovely, young, celestial nymph. Lilley Marlen is that adored and idealized Germany.

Das : You know, how patriotism has always inspired men with the highest ideals and has enchanted men with the finest poetry and romance. Love is at the root of everything. Love, more love and fulfilled love, outside which nothing more is needed for a youth. Love is all.

Rao : And for a sage and a saint too. For, among the modern youth of either sex who can live without their boy friends and girl friends ? The loftiest dialogues of Plato, the canticles of St. Francis of Assisi or Ramakrishna, the message of Gandhi, all are love. O love ! What an infinite power you are to men ! But when man identifies love with his baser and carnal passions, which becloud and imbrute his heart and mind, then begins woe unto man and mankind. Well-directed love is poetry, romanticism and idealism. Ill-directed love is decay, disease and death of both body and soul, of both mind and heart.

Then the Italian soldiers also joined in the conversation and Mr. Das became the interpreter for them. They talked on various subjects, including Mussolini-Hitler relations, the war operations, Indian freedom and on Subhas Chandra Bose. After sharing glasses of beer with the Italian *bersaglieri* we got in the car and drove along to Subhas' private residence at Sophienstrasse.

On our way home Rao told Das : I still remember the melodious tune of that song, Lilley Marlen. What a pity that I did not understand Italian and hence the depth of its meaning. Could you please translate it for me ?

Das then began to translate and sing it in a clear shrill voice :

Under that lantern every night and day,

By the side of barracks I stood waiting for you,

Also this evening wait I shall, and all the world I'll forget,

With you Lilley Marlen.....with you Lilley Marlen.

O trumpeter, this evening don't blow the horn,

* Once more I would meet her and to kiss her I pine for.

Bye-bye my little darling Love, O my Sweetheart,
 I'll carry you with me, for ev'r in my heart,
 With me Lilley Marlen...With me Lilley Marlen.
 When in deep lagoons I have to walk,
 In my breast you seem ever vibrate.
 What shall befall me I know not. Then I smile and think of
 you.

Of you Lilley Marlen...of you Lilley Marlen.
 If I close my eyes, still your face returns,
 As in that night under the circle lantern light,
 All the night, then, I dream of you, to return and rest
 With you Lilley Marlen...With you Lilley Marlen...

Rao : "How wonderful ! Now, to me, my Lilley Marlen will
 be my distant India. So distant and yet to near !" Rao, then, as if
 moved by the goddess of poetry-music, by sweet Saraswati, began
 to sing in the same tune :

In that wonderland of my birth and my love
 Beyond thy thin veil and grace my darling dear rests.
 May I touch thy shores again and in thy lap for ever rest
 With you, my India dear...With you, my India dear !
 In foreign lands have I strayed so long,
 O how I long to see you and rest in your embrace !
 Your thought fondly returns to me wherever I go,
 Yours, my India dear...Yours, my India dear.
 Let me gaze again those snow-capped mountains,
 Let me be inspired, enthralled once more,
 By your gentle breeze and by your kiss of love,
 Your kiss, my India...Your kiss, my India.
 Let your glorious sun in the East rise again,
 Let all the sons and daughters-of that ancient gracious land,
 Be wedded in an eternal love and fond embrace,
 In you, my love India...in you, my love India.

TWO FACTORY GIRLS

As Rao was singing the last strophe, the voice of two girls
 from the upper suite of a five-storied house in the street was heard,
 who also accompanied Rao singing Lilley Marlen. They stopped
 their car. As Das and Rao were singing, the girls hurried and
 come down by a lift. They were two girls working in a German

ammunition factory, who, with full confidence, came down, sat in the car and began to sing :

Merrily, merrily, go, my young friends from afar,
Verrily, verrily, know, Germany will nev'r mar
The glory of your ancient land.

Here we come and join you to show that you and we are one.
Indo-Germanic race we all are, to no other race we belong.
For time and for all eternity.

Of your brave country dear, that yong Führer is here,
Subhas Chandra Bose, who has come to our immortal shores
To see hoisted the Congress flag in New Delhi.

Life now becomes worth living, Love's blossoms everywhere,
No loneliness is any more, but joy of life here and there,
The unsullied joy of the brave.

India shines bright in your face,

Go ahead my friends and win the race,

In the brave athletic fight.

Ting, ting, ting, tolls the bell,

Win, win, win, says our heart,

Win the palm of life.

After these words one of the girls asked Das to get down and sit at the back. And she got in the front seat and began to drive. But where to ?

The party was gay and merry and they sang all the way. At about 8 P. M. they reached a big hall where there was night dancing for both the soldiers and civilians.

Nearing the dancing hall the driver-girl said : Here we are, boys. Get down. Come and join our party. We want you to feel happy in our country so that when we find ourselves stranded in your country we may also feel quite homely. Be merry, but not for the give-and-take policy, mind you, but all for love, in honour of that great Indian leader who is with us and is working for the freedom of his distant Fatherland. Subhas Bose will not join us in these dancing parties. You therefore come in his stead.

Before going to dance, they tarried for a while at a bar where Das and Rao met many old friends from Germany and Italy and made some more new friends. While Das stuck to his tea, Rao sipped glasses of his favourite, *Birra Peroni*. At the end, compelled by social etiquette, Das also had to take a bit of Frascati red vine. Das and Rao danced heartily until at about 11 P. M. Thereupon the two girls, who lead them to the party, formed another party of

their own with their close associates from the factory and the army. before whom one of them delivered an excellent speech on India.

Among other things she said :

"India of Buddhas and Asokas, of the Upanishads and the Vedanta cannot die. Nor can India remain enslaved for long. This war we fight, comrades, boys and girls, is a war of liberation and as Führer has said, there is going to be peace for a thousand years after this war is won. Forget not, my dear fellow-citizens of both Reich and of distant India, that all of us are engaged in one common struggle, the fight for the total annihilation of the plutocratic imperialists and the establishment of a new world order based on equality, freedom, work and bread for all. We mean to do it. We will do it."

The fact is that, before the party broke off, there were hundreds of young men and women who were weaned over by that remarkable girl to the cause of India and to support actively the cause and work of Subhas Chandra Bose.

The two girls, while leaving, made appointments with Das and Rao to meet on other occasions and discuss how best they could devote their time and energy to the cause of Indian freedom doing propaganda, through the path of sacrifice and undivided loyalty to their ideals, and bade them farewell for the time being.

SUBHAS' CORRESPONDENCE

Das, on being specially requested by Subhas Chandra to attend to his correspondence, used to go twice a week to Subhas' residence in the Sophienstrasse. The more they got to know of each other the closer became their friendship. Sometimes they talked for hours and they could read each other's mind almost intuitively. Among all the confidential secretaries and associates of Subhas, Das enjoyed a privileged position. Das was a selfless man, and like Subhas had sacrificed the love of a woman and the comforts of a salaried and easy family life for the sake of his ideals. Both of them, having abandoned the love of a woman, won the affection, love and esteem of many thoughtful and brave women, both at home and abroad. Both had but one passion, viz. to give up everything, and even to sacrifice their life on the altar of their Motherland, for upholding truth and justice, in the interests of the human family. They both, through their life and brave deeds, had proved their intense love of humanity in India, of India in humanity, to all those who came in contact with them.

Both of those two brave sons of India were highly critical about all the news that were being spread from the German Press and Radio. Dr. Göbbels could not influence them in any way. Mr. Das grew freer as he began to know Subhas Bose's ideals.

Every one who, on some occasion or other, accompanied Subhas to Herr Hitler, bore testimony that Subhas maintained the highest sense of dignity and independence of thought and expression, before that iron-willed man, who, after Napoleon Buonaparte, was the terror of Europe, since the fall of France.

As Das was his confidential friend and secretary, he (Das) was entrusted with the task of seeing to much of his personal correspondence. One day Subhas received a letter from a young student named Bankin Mukherjee, who, then in Austria, was planning to return to India, possibly with Subhas, in a submarine. That letter was really so intimate, personal and touching that Subhas dictated the following answer to Das to be conveyed to Bankin from Barisol, then marooned in Vienna. Here is Subhas' letter dictated in a poetic language.

GUIDANCE TO AN INDIAN YOUTH

How long will you sit on that rugged, lonely rock,
 Bemoaning your fate for years long ? No, awake !
 India's immortal child, blest with Nature's grace.
 Weep no more. Up with th'athlets, and win the Life's race.
 In your letter long and sweet, Bankin dear, a guide
 You ask me for, in which ripe fruits of my life-experience abroad
 May help to soothe you in your present plight,
 And steer your tiny barge across th' ocean of life, safe and straight.
 If weak you think you are, weak you'll really be,
 Mind assuming the form of objects thought of. See,
 Then, my friend, so near to me and dear, not to waste
 Your life-energy and priceless youth but mirage to taste,
 Got entangled, lost within the meshes of a sense-bound life,
 Gripped within the coils of *maya*, lose victory-palm and life-strife.
 What help, do you think, I can give, when even God
 Helps only those who help themselves ? Bestir, move onward !
 Close your eyes to follies past, stretch forth to the unseen Beyond,
 Redeem your past, glancing at that yonder shore ahead, into that
 blissful land.

For, I myself am a forlorn and a shipwrecked brother,
 Lost for long years in the midmost ocean wild, farther
 And farther removed from Life's noblest aim, and above all,
 From that true Bliss and blissful Truth, embracing the whole.
 Scriptures have I learnt many ; sundry creeds and systems
 Of Theology have I studied. Christain churches and Moslem

mosques,

Hindu temples and Buddhist *viharas* I entered in vain and prayed.
 Until th' enlightening message of deliverance came and I am saved.
 Do not feel worried overmuch at the long-drawn agony,
 Nor be dismayed at the dark night of your soul, nor at those thorny
 And dreary paths along which your weary legs may still have to tread.
 In this probation-time abide by your conscience and follow its lead.
 Fear not if you have lost faith in all religions and creeds,
 If your mental adventures have landed you in forest weeds,
 And the sting of universal scepticism strikes you at the very root,
 Leaving you to start off from zero, having nowhere to set your foot.
 Before we construct we need destroy ; before the calm there's the

gale ;

Before the sweet gentle spring breeze caresses and makes you sail,
 Remember the hailstones and freezing gloom of winter nights.
 So arc your present ordeals before the light dawns in your mind.
 Yes, believe neither priests nor maulavis, books nor prophets,
 But yourself. "Know thyself, be thyself, and accept thyself"
 Is an ancient Greek maxim, whose eco in Hindustan Guatama

Buddha tolls

Saying : "Within thee deliverance must be sought, each man his
 prison makes."

Hence Descartes, arriving there were both you and I have reached,
 Found his life-blood in his "*Cogito, ergo sum*", which propped
 Up his failing soul, on whose unshaken rock he could build
 A monumental system and find a safe anchorage which stilled
 The pangs of his denuded mind. So every creative mind,
 Has to plod its weary way alone, unseen, unfriended, and find
 Its path, which, at length, will quench its thirst and bring
 The barge back to heavenly home, whence we come, where angels

sing.

To confess the truth, believe me, Bankin dear, so glad I am
 That along the path of great men you meander and roam ;
 That mental honesty and intellectual integrity have made you leave
 Those paternal traditions, break those man-made walls and cleave

To what you see, feel and think, is right, true and just,
 From which ideal have made you swerve away neither wealth nor
 lust.

Your mind is now void and empty, a *tabula rasa*, all-receptive,
 Which the first condition is to know the Truth, feel, perceive.
 Now you start afresh to build up. Now, now you reap.
 The hour of desolation is long past. Arise, be up, don't weep.
 Now stand on your legs and of your self be the architect,
 With steadfastness and will-power a mansion build that can your
 soul protect,

From the raging waves and wild gales of this sea of life,
 And will guide you through to that yonder shore, sure and safe.
 Waste not your life in the dreary desert sands of sense-boundedness,
 But seek and find that unshaken Rock of Ages, God-mindedness,
 On which if you anchor your sailing barge, invincible you'll be,
 A fortress you become impregnable by land, air and sea.
 In these tempestuous times your Motherland men like you will need,
 Who will fight the issues out and stop not the wounds to heed,
 Whom lust of power and mammon-traps will not blind nor enthrall,
 But Duty's stern voice will steer them straight through all trials,
 great or small,

Brave hearts for whom principles are become dearer than gold,
 Who, before the mighty tyrants, can hold their heads erect and bold,
 Who have set their eyes on Reality and are from *maya's* embrace
 freed,

And spend their life-energy to lavish good upon men and lead
 Them all to that *satyam-jnanam-anandam* world which is our
 true land,

Whither through various roads we journey along, to our Fatherland.
 In the lap of Mother India you rest and let her ancient wisdom
 Sober you down, and enable your mind to soar higher to that
 kingdom,

Where East and West meet and mate and become One Whole,
 Making you an integrated man, a *mahatma*, a grand soul.
 O love your land of birth next to Truth-God and give her
 Your heart, mind and soul with undivided loyalty and cheer.
 Bring her boons from the North, South, East and West,
 And place your garland offerings on her loving, maternal breast.
 But let no narrow nationalism cool down your soul afire,
 But learn to see Man, the Eternal, in India, Europe, everywhere.

For, Man is prior to, and deeper than men, Christians and Hindus,
 Easterners and Westerners, saints and sinners, seers and sadhus.
 As you proceed along through this life's solemn main, Bankin dear,
 You 'll see and learn that man is brother to man, whether far or near.
 If persistent enough you are and unflinchingly resolved
 To break open the shell and reach the kernel and get freed,
 You'll soon be convinced of the truth of what I say
 That Man is greater than his nation or race, being a ray
 Emanating from the ever-shining Sun of Plato's ideal world,
 Which sages of all climes have always sung and extolled.
 Then, my soul-mate, that morbid distinction between rich and poor,
 White and black, Hindus and Moslems will vanish, and everywhere
 You'll see the oneness of Mankind, of his religion, culture and
 Soul, when we are Self-realized, at our journey's end.
 Whatev'r country I have gone to, one truth have I always learnt,
 That man is the same everywhere and when we fathom deep,
 We know that his birth and death and the space between,
 That short or long span which we call life, is one, profoundly one,
 In every place, at all times, and with every race. Know it,
 And a glimpse into the infinite mystery of Man you will get.
 Now let those heroes of Golden Age of nations all awake !
 Let India's sacred lore unfold and your heart embrace,
 That will make you sing a canticle of love and grace,
 That you are born Bharat's immortal child, in this

God's vast universe.

Preach and give the god of bread and butter, of cloth and shelter
 To India's hungry, naked millions and make them free to mutter
 That OM, symbol of India's greatness throughout the ages,
 Sung underneath her skies by all her seers, rishis and sages.
 Let not your self-realized fire be ev'r extinguished,
 Nor that light grow dim by indolence, however disguised,
 But let your life be on God's sanctury a burning candle,
 That will feed the hungry, clothe the naked, befriend the humble.
 Be, indeed, a citizen of this world, an heir to ancient Greece,
 Whence to you will flow the spirit of Homer, Plato and Socrates ;
 A sharer of that mighty imperial Rome and her world-flung Law,
 A man in whom streamlets from ancient Egypt and Babylonia,
 From China, Persia and every ancient land will flow.
 But above all, be the repository of life of *Bharat-Varsha*,
 Where Dravidas and Aryans, Huns and Sakhas. Chinese and

Mogols,

ly cherished, during the first prime of his youth, the Indian cultural lore that still runs in his veins, is now slowly bringing him back to his senses and, if only he could see the truth, I feel sure he will be a great servant of India and humanity. I am not a poet now, but a cold-blooded politician and a "violent revolutionary", as they call me; but now visualizing the mental state of Bankin, I become poetic and idealist again. God protect him, that dear old friend of mine !

Das : When the prodigal son to his home returns,
All his past follies washing in streams of tears,
And when self-redeeming repentance dawns,
Then blooms the flower of grace again in our lawns.
O how great is the power of Truth ! How grand !
How eternally fresh and young, how sublime !

At this moment the porter come in carrying a personal letter from Hitler requesting Subhas to see him the next day at 4. 30 P.M. at the Chancery, if that suited Subhas' programme. After two minutes of deliberation Subhas gave the answer assenting to Hitler's request and the messenger conveyed it to Hitler. Das thereafter left Subhas and returned to his lodgings in Berlin.

SUBHAS WITH HITLER

At 4. 15 P.M. sharp Hitler's special car was waiting at the door of Subhas' residence and at 4. 30 the great Indian revolutionary arrived at the Chancery. Armed S. S. soldiers and special guards of honour escorted Subhas to Hitler's quarters. Long, high-roofed and wide halls. Most up-to-date and scientific convenience everywhere. As Subhas was passing by, accompanied by Dr. Von Trott of the Foreign Office, two Germans in civilian clothes came towards Subhas and greeted him saying : "Heil Hindustan". Subhas saluted them and walked along. Hitler was telephoning as Subhas entered the room. Finishing the telephone conversation in a minute, the Führer walked up to the door and received Subhas with a fraternal shake-hand, and taking his hand in his, they walked on to a table standing by the side of a large window, from where the open space and clear skies could be seen. On that day they talked on various subjects and their conversation lasted for nearly fifty five minutes.

The main topic of the discussion during that interview was the the impending formation of the Indian National Army in Asia, the fulfilment of the "Zentrale Freies Indian" which Subhas formed in Berlin in the year 1942.

Hitler : Although I am now hard pressed and my Germany, you may be sure, my comrade, all the moral support of the German Nation and even the material help, as far as it lies within our power, will be yours, for you to accomplish the great dream you and your compatriots in India have, the dream of freedom. The world outside, specially the Anglo-Saxon plutocracy, makes insidious propaganda against Hitler and Germany depicting Fascism and Nazism as the reign of terror, as the blood-stained and satanical enemy of humanity. India, they say, is divided against herself and Subhas Bose is a traitor to the country. These calumnies are bound to come. The other day, the private secretary to Von Ribbentrop was telling us how the Intelligence Department in Lisbon is twisting and pruning your words in order to justify their statement that Subhas Chandra Bose has sold his soul and mind, heart and body to Hitler. They grow on these lies.

Subhas : Vituperation follows applause, as pain follows pleasure. One should not heed it. But I must be true to my own inner light. It is conscience that compels me to fight for truth and justice, even at the risk of unmerited dishonour, misrepresentation, malignant and self-interested criticism, imprisonment or even physical death. Our duty is to do and the result will take care of itself. I know the sinister intentions that are behind the Tories of Britain, and although they pose themselves as gentlemen, they are the enemies of not only Indian freedom, but of all human freedom of every race, everywhere.

The only country today where the most advanced ideas on Socialism and Democracy are in the vanguard is the Soviet Union. Here, as you know already, I disagree fundamentally from you. You certainly call the great movement centering around you a form of Socialism suited to the historical and cultural background of the German Nation. Hence you call your movement National Socialism. After my arrival in this country, and since I got to know the people and the working of the Nazi State and the people from inside, I am becoming more convinced that the economico-political ideology of the Soviet Union of Socialist Republics is indeed very different from the foundations of the German Nazi State. But in both countries the dictatorship exists symbolized in one supreme representative man. But now you have started on a dangerous game with Russia.

Hitler : Well, from the Eastern front I fear no defeat, however hidden and mighty the Russian military resources and camouflaged

her tactics may be. Now to be frank with you, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour has really prolonged my sleepless nights and worried days. The American resources are so vast and inexhaustible that, if the war is protracted for long, the tripartite powers may have to suffer in the end. What else is the tactics of Mr. Churchill but to prolong the war to such a length of time until he could win the whole-hearted support of America to fight Germany? The British have always won the battles on the blood of others. The British often win battles on the tables, through sheer diplomacy, whereas we fight and our blood is shed in vain, as we are not politically and diplomatically as experienced as Britain. That island, although a fortress of freedom in itself, is the cause of all the European wars and, in this century, of two world-wide conflagrations. The other nations fight and die, and the British will emerge out victorious to share the booty. What an accursed dividend on the blood of sister and neighbour nations!

Japan has certainly embarked upon a colossal folly by attacking Pearl Harbour, however encouraging and cheering her initial successes over America may be. In my solitary moments I doubt whether it was right on our part to declare war on the Soviet Union. But we could not have foreseen all these further complications which perhaps only an astute diplomatic politician like Mr. Churchill could have calculated. In fact, Mr. Churchill had said that "the time would come when our enemy will make some fatal blunder" which, he said, he would turn into our defeat. That is the history of the last war and the so-called defeat of Germany. This time Germany has taken all the measures so that such a mistake may never be repeated. We are sure that 1918 will not be repeated. But the Pearl Harbour is now haunting me like an infernal nightmare.

You know, perhaps more than any leading Indian today, the heart of Germany. You will believe me, I feel sure, when I say that I am pondering over the freedom of India, and how to open India's markets to all the countries of the world. Those Britishers are not ashamed to make the insensate propaganda that Germany would quietly walk in, if the British quit India. They must remember that in the clear day light of 1942 there can not be any civilized power, which could walk in and rule India with a foreign viceroy, with the Indian miserslings serving under him.

Subhas : What you wrote about India in your "Mein Kampf" has always hurt me. Italy had indeed a shameful deal with

Abyssinia and there the conditions are much worse than they are in India today. This flagrant injustice was done in the year 1936. The others argue that the two devils tied by the same axis-tail will devour the victims fallen under their heels. Today words do not mean much. Treaties are but scraps of paper and nothing more. One day you make the pact of non-aggression with Russia and the next day you attack her unexpectedly. Today the Western powers glory in their Atlantic Charter. Tomorrow it will be just a paper to be preserved in a museum and not a bond to be respected. That British bull dog, Mr. Winston Churchill has said that the Atlantic Charter need not be expected to be applied to India.

I fully share the view that in this world-war both the belligerent countries have committed injustice. But, to my way of thinking, the injustice committed by the British imperialists is far baser than the juvenile delinquency and imperialist expansion in which the Tripartite Powers indulged. Germany, Italy and Japan are young nations, full of potential energy and vitality, industrious and intelligent. The sun of civilization and culture rises again in the East. At this moment, unless America's resources are fully revealed, we cannot say, with any certainty, how this war is going to end. There may never be a victorious nation, but only a group of war-exhausted countries with mountains of destruction, hatred, and mutual co-operative suicidal mania left behind, in every one of the belligerent countries. If the war is protracted to its bitter end, I agree with what you said, Adolf, that there would be neither victorious nor vanquished nations, but only the survivors and the annihilated countries. What a hard reality ! O what a horror !

Hitler : But now there is no going back for any of us. Either America will crush us and the Jews will reign in this world, or we will crush the American Dollar and the Jews will be annihilated. International Jewry is hard to be broken, and it will not bend as long as America serve their interests. Of Mr. Churchill and other British sea dogs we do not take any notice, if the two great colossi, I mean America and Russia, are isolated from Britain and an understanding between Russia and America, and then between Germany and Russo-American coalition is reached.

Hitler saying this, as if hit in his heart, leaned back to his chair and fell, as it were in a swoon, for a while. His eyes were closed and his breathing became slow. But the same facial

expression was there, the index of an iron-willed man, obsessed with the Nazi ideal of a World New Order, with intense and passionate love for his country, and fully determined to overthrow that Empire, where, they used to say that "the sun never sets."

The personal attendant came and sprinkled a few drops of cold water on Hitler's face which brought him back to the normal consciousness.

On regaining his consciousness Hitler began : God's help and providence are upon the German nation. India also will rise again. Crucifixion of the *homo sapiens* is the prelude to his resurrection. The sufferings to which Germany is subject today are trying and we must relieve this strain within the shortest time possible. We want the new order, not based any longer on money or power, but on labour and the capacity to produce and survive.

Now, Subhas, my Indian comrade, listen to these words
Of mine. Nev'r for a moment I believe that at cross-roads
We stand. The East will meet and mate with the West,
And these twain shall nev'r more stand apart, but rest
In an eternal embrace of love and comradeship,
When will be solved all the riddles of human strife.
You and I may fall in the battlefield,
But hope is there that brave men will shield
The honour of our two countries great and dear.
Let the whole world flock around us these words to hear.
Nazi Germany and Nationalist India will unveil
To future historians our inner life and hail
For ever those infinite sufferings shared in common,
In which are our battles fought, and in spirit won.
Immortal Deutschland ! Your sister-nation in the East
Is in the same agony. My Germany, never shall you rest
Until unjust and haughty crowns are made to tumble,
And hoist the swastika there with the hammer and sickle,
low and humble.

Ye, sons and daughters of Deutschland,
Our immortal Fatherland,
Through your might and right
Lead us thither safe and straight.

Subhas : India loves to see your country grow in righteous might, Germany, this land where deep philosophy and thought have ever thrived. No other nation underneath the western sun has today risen to your heights in political consciousness, in

industry and power of thought, in all walks of material progress and life. O Germany arise. Remain not for long in distress.

God's blessings with you abide,
 Let the forces of darkness hide
 Behind the infernal walls, so wide.
 May India and Germany be closely knit
 In the great Comity of Nations ! Let
 The entire Mankind be unified,
 Under one justice and one shield.
Pax Britannica illusion is no longer there,
 Let *Pax humana* reign, for ever, everywhere !

After fixing up the time for the next meeting, those two great revolutionaries embraced each other and bade good-bye. Hitler accompanied Subhas to the gate of the Chancery and the S.S. bodyguards escorted Subhas to the car. He reached home by 6 P.M.

A NEW MAGDALEN

Man is in a state of constant tug-of-war in this world until he has triumphed over his lower instincts and has realized his Self. Man is an animal endowed with the light of reason. It is the attraction and repulsion of the sense-bound life that make him deflect from the path of reason, and get himself lost in the wilderness of thoughtlessness. Aristotle said that both pleasure and pain, when not guided by reason, lead one to shipwreck. Plato, the Stoics, Buddhists and many great philosophers and thinkers, under every clime and at all times, have held that man is essentially a spiritual being and that his real happiness and life consist in abstaining wholly from the sense-bound trammels of his earthly pilgrimage.

As Job of Jewish mythology said, our life on this earth is a continuous warfare. The constant challenge of the cosmic forces are there. The tension between passion-emotion-life on the one side, and the reason and wisdom-life on the other, are ever struggling within us. Allurements and seductions, errors and fears are constantly trying the strength of our character, and the moment we become inconsiderate, the adverse forces will gain mastery over us and we get shipwrecked in the middle of the sea of life. Our life consists in a series of temptations which prove the strength and determination of our will, of our character.

In the life of great men we have innumerable instances of these trials, both private and public, both spiritual and physical, which, when carefully analysed and studied, can prove to be of great help

to us, as we are also treading along the same path of hard battles, to reach ever-growing mental vision and inner freedom. The sum total of the victories and defeats during our struggles in life is what constitutes our personality. As Rome was not built in a day, so great men were not formed within a month or a year. The final crowning of all the former fights may be almost instantaneous as in the case of St. Paul, St. Augustine or Asoka ; but the tilling of the ground is a long and a hard process.

Subhas Chandra lived in Berlin for a few weeks more after his visit to Hitler. The trials he had to encounter were spiritual, physical, military and political. When a brave man is made braver by his repeated victories, he sees a boundless horizon of freedom before his mind. So it was the case with Subhas Chandra.

It was on the April Fool's Day when the cool and healthy breeze was caressing every resident in Berlin, that great centre of political tempests and military and diplomatic activity, that one of the spiritual trials of his life happened. Man with his brute force, and woman with her charm and beauty, have laid low many minds. Man is strength, woman is beauty. Man is thought, woman is emotion. Man is force, woman is grace.

During the war years, as it had always been from the remotest times down to the wars of Napoleon, and to our own days, the animal passions find open outlets, and the mankind sinks lower and lower after every war. Entire streets were converted into brothels where women were sold and hired. In Calcutta and other Indian cities, reports were reaching us, even honest civilians were driven out of their homes, which were then converted into brothels for the soldiers.

The Berlin prostitutes had grown in number and efficiency. Some of them surpassed the notorious harlots of Paris. There were refined and highly aristocratic demi-mondes too, whose targets were only royal persons, majestic and dignified youth. In many respects they resembled the *heterae* or the higher classes of prostitutes in ancient Greece.

There is hardly any exception in the history of the great souls, who, at some time or other, did not make up his or her mind to lead a life of complete *Brahmacharya*, and was not severely tempted at some time or other in his or her pilgrimage. The fight for purity may prove to be a bloody and a life-long trial.

Helen Waguer was one of the brightest stars who had struck

wounded three strong-willed men in Berlin. None of the soldiers could ever approach her. Her victims were idealist giants.

Her heart was firmly fixed on the conquest of Subhas Chandra. On April 1st she asseverated to her friends that she would not return home until after courting with Subhas.

The supreme hour had come. Subhas was walking in his flower garden alone, as he was accustomed to do after his evening meals. Behind the roses, Miss. H. Wagner, still in her teens, full of charm and fascination, was hiding. She suddenly put on a very modest look and appeared before Subhas saying : Hello, Mr. Bose ! Do you remember me ? You have met me at the Youth Club, by the side of the lake in the Tiergarten park, last month, when some of the Indian friends of mine, who are students in Berlin, introduced me to you ?

Subhas, trying to recollect for a while, said : Quite possible. But I can't remember. Quite possible that you were introduced to me that day when I saw there hundreds of new faces.

Miss. Wagner, covering up one lie with another : On that day I asked you something about the Forward Block too. Do you now remember, Mr. Bose ?

Subhas : I am afraid, I can't remember you.

Wagner : Well, I will make you remember. By the way, do you mind me stealing away a bit of your precious time ? Or are you busy as usual ? But I would like to learn certain facts from you, if you don't mind.

Subhas : Tonight I am not as busy as other days. Do walk along and tell me what you want to say.

Wagner : Yes, I know that today you are not as busy as other nights. I got this information from your private secretary.

Subhas smilingly : O you seem to be fully informed about my programme for the day. Who are you ? What's your name ?

Wagner : My name is Helen Wagner. I have just finished my course in the University of Berlin in political economy and history. I have come to see you today because I heard that you are leaving within a week to inspect the Russian zones of operation. You will pardon me, I hope, for having come here without any previous arrangement. I thought of trying my luck just to see you once more, and to disclose to you one of my heart's desires, before you embark upon the great adventure of freeing India's millions from the foreign yoke.

Subhas . O there is no need for you to apologize. I

understand the difficulties to make previous appointments. Now you tell me what you have come here for.

Wagner : Ever since I read Max Müller's : "India, what can it teach us" ?, and Paul Deussen's "Philosophy of the Upanishads", I must say, I became a convert to India's heart and soul. The more I open the books of the orientalists like Monier Williams, Rhys Davids and Shiller, and a good many other minor writers and scholars, I grow more and more fascinated to that grand ideal which India represents. Now you are the symbol of that spiritual and dynamic gospel of India's cultural heritage. My heart's desire is that I should join the Indian Freedom Movement, and dedicate my life and energy to India, to her freedom, to her greatness.

Today, my friend, right here, under the Berlin skies,
 As the stars, the moon and the cloudless sky, bear witness,
 My heart and soul I wed to India's immortal life,
 In whose infinite ocean is my life lost, as a chaste wife
 In the arms of her all-loving husband, in ecstasy rapt.
 No other aim for me in this mortal life is left.
 O sun and moon, God's eyes on earth,
 Register this love and bear witness
 To all generations that come and go.
 Let the infinity, that is the Universe,
 Enfold and embrace me in its lap !
 Men and women are merry with their little joys,
 But Helen is never happy with these trifling toys.
 Her heart longs for the Infinite and the Eternal.
 O she will nev'r rest until she has realized All.
 With you, I would like to go all the way,
 Caring not what men or the world may say.
 With you, my friend, to Asia I feign to reach,
 There to join your army and fight, I beseech.
 Many, many days ago, I was in a vision told
 That everything I should give up and have them sold
 For serving the Ideal, for idealizing Service
 Of Him who is the Self of All.

So saying, Miss. Wagner feigned fainting, and suddenly fell to the ground.

Subhas, being touched by the noble sentiments she expressed approached near her and tried to raise her up. Then she was whispering something between her teeth, but nothing distinct.

Subhas then said : I'd better go out to call a doctor or a nurse to see what is wrong with you.

Wagner : No, please, Mr. Bose, do not leave me alone. Please, I will be all right within a few minutes. Do help me to stand up.

Subhas with both hands helped her to stand up. But she was falling. She then turning towards Subhas : Please help me to walk a little until I reach there and drink some water.

Leaning on the shoulders of Subhas, she walked along and they entered the house of Subhas. It was 8. 30 P. M. The attendants and maids of the house had gone out that day to the theatre to see a variety show. There was none in the house that night.

So, after leaving her on an easy chair, Subhas went out to fetch some water. After drinking a glass of cool and fresh water Wagner recovered. Later on, she extended her hands as though to ask Subhas to help her to rise from the chair. Holding the hands of Subhas, she got up and went near and sat by his side on the adjoining sofa. And she began :

This is the day I had longed to see,
To say to you that I am to you what you are to me—
Your comrade-in-arms, the symbol of your love.
You, O Unseen Lover, Friend, who frown from above,
Now, Heaven, help me to say the supreme word,
To tear asunder my heart's fetters and take the sword
To cut off the last moorings of this frail vessel,
Before my Subhas and I enter the barge of love and sail.

Then, Wagner, almost electrified by the intensity of her intelligent love, and burning possessive greed, held Subhas in her arms, compelling him to do her will.

She, then, threw her arms around the neck of Subhas, who, resenting it, withdrew a bit. Later gently touching the face of Subhas she said : "Now, you, Subhas Chandra, the morning sun, look, look, look straight into my eyes. I am yours. Take me. Hold me. I am yours. Yours without reserve. Yours for ever". So saying, she pressed herself closer to saying. Subhas, however, making a strong effort, got himself freed from her grasp and withdrew towards the wall.

Wagner, then, with gentle, loving and glowing eyes, began :
What was Kamala to Pandit Nehru's heart and achievements,
What was Kasturba to mould and grow the human truths
In Mahatma's heart, as Heloise to Abelard, that I long to be to you.

Alone you cannot pursue in this life. But I would woo
 You and by your hands to be wooed I thirst. But mind,
 No trace of thoughtless romance in which many hearts indulge,
 When prime of beauty and vigour of youth beam forth in life,
 Is here, but it's a royal road for us to win this mortal strife.
 Subhas Chandra, dawn of my heart, dream of my life,
 O how have I spent my past three years in sighing much
 For you, who, not in a photograph or dream of imagination,
 But in body and soul now stand before me ! Greater devotion
 Than mine you'll never get in life. More than any woman
 Has ever loved a man you will be adored and served,
 Specially in that mental comradeship and enlightened love,
 Which, I know, in your lonely moments you so badly need.
 If and when you and I understand what Destiny has fated us,
 O how I wish...How I wish...How...I...long...my dear.....

sweet-tongued Subh as.

As she finished these words, Subhas, with a divine effulgence
 and with dignified majesty, began :

However noble your aims may be,
 Dear daughter of Deutschland, please see
 That I am vowed down to celibacy,
 Through which alone will accomplished my mission be.
 India have I embraced as my eternal bride,
 How can I, even for a moment, withdraw from her side ?
 O, far no boon or blessing in this world,
 No, not for hundred heavens in the next, I will ever
 Desert her. Far away from her shores now I live,
 But no divorce from that eternal wedlock,
 Which will thrive for all time and eternity.
 I doubt not for a moment your sincerity,
 But about my own life and dreams, in its entirety
 You know not, No, you don't. So I say, my gentle sister,
 Go you back to your paternal home, and leave me alone to minister
 And serve my Lady Love, my India, in my own way,
 Outside which, for me, of hope I find no ray.

Wagner : But love is sacred, they say, that pure love,
 When refused, brings the wrath of gods which prove
 That with the eternal principles of life,
 Neither you nor I can ever trifle with.

Friend, my Darling, Love, do not fail to read
 What springs in the depths of a woman's heart, but heed

To what a divinely-appointed partner has to bring
 To your young and idealist heart, which will ring
 Like an eternal music, which is the psalm of life.
 Subhas, stop, think. This chance once lost never returns.
 A man rich in ideals, and power of thought and love, methinks,
 Is a rare pearl to be found. So, know you not, that a woman,
 Rich in beauty, grace, love and devotion, but, above all,
 In that intelligent approach towards life, is rare ?
 Now by Heaven's grace, these two pearls have met.
 Can they ever part without having their minds set
 On the vast horizon of Love, the great dream in life ?
 Truth that is in the heart of man is love,
 Love is Truth too. Hence God Himself is love,
 As they say. Remember not those sleepless nights
 And restless days when your heart longed for love ?
 India's ideal you must symbolize in some person,
 Who, to you, will be a comrade-love and your heart's *alter ego*.
 Think twice, Subhas, before you say to me this night,
 'Get thee hence, sister dear, for thy suit is not right'.

Subhas :

Thrice have I thought, and, yet, with a clear conscience
 I have to say : 'Get thee hence', for I need no suit
 In this world.
 That vision I have had in Calcutta *Maidan*
 Is ever fresh, ever alive, and thou, my sister dear,
 Go thy way.
 For me there is no other song, no romance,
 But that of my Mother-India-Love, which like a lance
 Has wounded my heart.
 O distant land of my birth and love,
 Shine more resplendently below, above,
 Within me, without, everywhere.
 Miss. Helen Wagner, get thee hence,
 Let this be an episode that will fill
 The infinite reservoir of our hearts.

So saying, Subhas made her good-bye. But Wagner approached him nearer and holding him pressed him to her breast. Then Subhas, after violently getting himself freed, said : Please, be off. Miss Wagner. I cannot spare a minute more, nor I can respond, nor reciprocate your love, except by treating you as my sister and not as a damsel of my love.

A divine look of strong determination and the passion-flames of idealism gleamed forth from the face of Subhas in such a way that the temptress became fully converted to Subhas' purity. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the whole world of psychology that was veiled underneath the taciturn, and meditative person, Subhas Chandra, was revealed to her. She then, of her own free will, withdrew a step backwards and exclaimed :

He, by whose power the sun, moon and the stars revolve,
Has in my heart deigned to shine a light, a firm resolve,
Which, my brother, to you I will confess,
Is *Brahmacharya* which you teach me now and profess.
The border line that exists between love and lust
Is dim and tender. Only love can into infinity burst,
Whereas, lust circumscribes and our minds clots
Within the iron walls of self-imprisonment it begets.
Forgive me, friend, forgive me for my audacity
To come to you and sell my knowledge with such stupidity
As to endanger your angelic purity. A great lesson I have
learned,
And let all the world know what from the wages of sin I have
earned.

My confession to you and the world is this,
That with crooked mind I came and straightened up I return
Homewards, clarified in thought, purified in mind.
And my inward sin has led me to the threshold of life.
Go now, you brave son of Hindustan, back to your land,
Make her free and all her children pure, a noble band,
Who for ever will sing that song which will be heard
Throughout the world with truth and love enriched.
If, by Haven's decree, I ever come to your India dear,
This solemn pledge before you I take and let none jeer,
For ever to serve the catholic ideals of *sat-chit-ananda*
And bring that gospel to the West, in *pavitra-ananda*.
Subhas approached her and said :

Not by my words, my friend, but by Heaven's grace is your
heart changed.
Go, go under your paternal roof, and let your grace and charm
serve

For diffusing human truths and winning hearts to Truth.
In truth, I tell you, friend, that, unless you are born anew,
The irradiation of Truth will never transform you.

Let not that crooked intention with which you came
 Ever worry you, which a prelude to Truth-Love has now
 become.

Wagner : Moments there are in our lives when gifts of Heaven
 Are showered when we begin to prophecy, and a
 haven
 Of peace and bliss we enjoy. Let me tell you, ere
 I part,
 That to the Great Asia you will return,
 But not to that great Bengal province once again
 Nor shall you see the land of your birth and dreams
 any more.
 But the work you will do during the next few
 months
 Will crown your whole life. Instrumental you
 will be
 To unify many within your wonderland of India
 and listen

THE HERO OF HINDUSTAN you will remain.

Then Wagner, holding the hands of Subhas, with a tender
 and sweet smile, with beams of love emanating from her face, said :
 Never more in this world I'll see you again,
 Nev'r more shall we meet in this life's solemn main,
 But when that supreme hour comes, remember this Helen,
 This daughter born of your purity, who holding your hands
 Has said : Subhas, forward. When you and I are gone away
 These stars and the moon will continue to refresh this Mother
 Earth.

And let us watch and wait until we have met afresh,
 In the Unknown Beyond, under better skies, with no blemish.

Then they bade good-bye and embraced each other with what
 St. Paul calls, "holy kiss", and Wagner went back home to reflect,
 to contemplate, to serve her new ideal.

A STAR IN GOD'S FIRMAMENT

Before Subhas left for Japan—or to the Russian front
 as many thought—, there was intense activity in Subhas
 Chandra Bose circle. Many friends of Subhas came to convey
 their best wishes, and wish him good luck in his great enterprize, to
 free one fifths of mankind from political subjection and economic
 exploitation. Often we found him in his room, absorbed in thought

and meditation, often with a copy of the Bhagavad Gita before him. His answers to the queries were laconic, terse, and to the point. He hardly ever cracked jokes, nor we ever found him laughing. His occasional smile added grace to his seriousness. He was towering over most of the political leaders of the Axis and the Allied countries.

His bitter experiences had compelled him not to compromise the hardest realities of the economico-political life with undiluted idealism. He believed in both Caesar and God and was prepared to render unto both what was their due, with the least compromise possible between idealism and the hard realities of every day life in India and the world. What Gandhiji said that the victory of Subhas would be the defeat of Gandhism is 90% true. The victory of "Bosism" would have also meant 75% defeat of "Nehruism." That is not to be understood on a purely mathematical basis, with the logical inference that Panditji is nearer to Subhas than Gandhiji.

In God's wonderful firmament there are many stars and each one is unique, and each one has its respective sphere of action in His Creation. Comparisons are always odious. We do not need a mechanical and monotonous uniformity. Unity in variety is the law of Nature. Gandhiji undoubtedly is the greatest spiritual power-house alive in the political world today. Panditji is still in a wonderland of idealism. That idealism has saved him from shipwreck, although Nehru's idealism invited severe criticism from cold and materialist interpreters of Marxian communism. Next in the Indian political horizon is Subhas who, through his independent will, brave and courageous steps, has launched himself into the Unknown, leaving to the brave and thinking youth of India and the world a pattern, which we should try to understand, and microscopically psychoanalyze, deducing the practical conclusions or lessons from his life.

During the last months of his stay in Europe, Subhas's visits to Italy became more frequent. There once again he met our old friend Abdul with Angiolina, who assured him that they would leave Italy at the first opportunity and return to India to dedicate themselves to service, service, service. Signor Miccozzi said that he would continue to study India and spread the message of Indian culture and the Vedanta among his own compatriots, not necessarily to supplant the Catholic Church, but to integrate and enhance the historic and cultural lore of the Western civilization, and to make

the Roman Church more Catholic, to give more life to that Catholic Church, the greatest miracle of history, the kingdom of God on earth.

Iqbal Shaddai continued to strengthen his 'Friends of India' with the help of Ajit Singh. Subhas was giving him directions as to how all the available forces in Italy should be mobilized for the supreme end : the political and economic freedom of India. Many Indian war-prisoners in Italy joined the National Army which Subhas was then organizing.

AT THE LAST PARTY

Two Indian students had arranged a party on the occasion of Subhas leaving Europe to which a few prominent leaders and citizens from Berlin were invited. The organizers were so ambitious as to bring even Hitler and Mussolini to the party. But the grave responsibilities weighing on the shoulders of the two dictators did not allow them to join that party. That was the biggest and longest party which Subhas ever attended in Europe. There was the most friendly and sympathetic atmosphere. There were several invitees and the party lasted for a quite a few hours. It began at 6 P. M. and went up to midnight and even later.

There were talks and discussions on all subjects. There was toasting, boasting and boozing. Best wishes, good wishes and kind wishes from many quarters. There was also Mr. John Amery, the son of Leopold Amery, the former Secretary of State for India, at the party. In fact, Subhas and John Amery made an intimate personal friendship ever since they first met in Germany. John Amery was lively and spirited and his words were forceful. He was 100% against his father, and he lost no opportunity to expose the crimes of his father, then at the India Office, and the imperial policy pursued from Whitehall. Turning to Subhas Chandra, who was sitting by the table, Mr. Amery said : If you return to India the first thing you have to do is to destroy the viceregal lodge, that centre of political backmailing, and the throne of the British imperial lion, and, then, bomb the India Office, where my father is corrupting and corroding every sane person in England prejudicing all against India.

Subhas : We need not bomb them. They will bomb themselves if and when the deliberate injustice they have perpetrated against India and humanity is brought back to their conscience. Because injustice, in the long run, is self-destructive and uproots the very tree which shelters their agents under its shady branches.

Von Hindenburg (not that great rival to Hitler, but a minor

star in the history of modern Germany) : Yes Subhas. Justice is its own reward. Certainly we are guilty of the racial discrimination. But the colour-bar fostered between the whites and the browns in India, in North America and South Africa, is far more destructive than the anti-Semitic move in Germany. We use quick and scientific methods to annihilate the enemies of our State. But in India the British are killing you by inches. I dare say that the British would have been much more cruel and intolerant than we, the Germans, if they had found themselves under the same conditions in which we were in the year 1918 and since.

Singor Fracassini, one from the Italian Embassy in Berlin : I have seen and fought many wars since the year 1918. Now I am ever-growingly becoming a pacifist. I believe that unless the teachings of men like Tolstoy and Gandhi are brought to bear upon our political and social life, I do not find any way out from this labyrinth, in which we are all lost. Whether the Axis win this war or not, the seeds of future wars will continue to remain. On the contrary they will only grow more widespread and the causes of war more deep-rooted. This time the peace treaty will be fraught with more war-germs than the treaty of Versailles. Pacifism, my friends, pacifism. This is the gospel of today.

Wilson (who was with Mr. John Amery) : I hope you did not say that in your official capacity, or else the Fascists would not have put you, a pacifist, in their Embassy, at the capital of the Reich. Strange ! How most of the thoughtful people in England used to be pacifists before the war, and now all of them—except a few conscientious objectors—have turned out to be active firebrands in the vanguard to crush Germany ! Mr. Herbert Morrison was a pacifist during the last war. Now as the Home Member in the British War Cabinet, he is using and abusing his power to wreck Germany. Honest and thoughtful minds should concede that the whole system of pacifism, as expounded by Tolstoy or Gandhi, (because I do not believe for a moment that the New Testament sayings of Jesus, nor Gita, do ever defend the principles of pacifism under any circumstances) will be found wanting in modern life. Like old women find religious comfort in some songs in the church or by conversing with the priests, so, many weak minds find a philosophy of life in pacifism. But I do not suggest for a moment that Mr. Gandhi or men of that type are weak-minded. But the emotionalism of many among the Indian masses is but a transient phase of the great influence exercised by Mr. Gandhi,

who still holds the intellectually less advanced people of India under his spell.

Schusschnig (one of the students in Berlin University): That is exactly what I had been telling my friends here. Gandhiji is but a precursor and an agitator of the masses in India, who are still cowed down by religious superstitions, who are still ignorant and illiterate. But when the ground is prepared, his pacifism and his Wardha Scheme will have to go. In fact, it has been clearly seen and frankly admitted by Gandhi himself when he proclaimed that he would be in the minority when the Swaraj is won. Pandit Nehru, that gallant admirer and follower of Gandhiji, did admit that charka, and the whole Gandhian economics and philosophy of the charka, were but a temporary expedient, for the time being. But, later on, such a temporary expedient, for the actual experience of the twentieth century man, pacifism may have to be abandoned. What do you say to that, Mr. Bose?

Subhas: There is substantial agreement between us. With the exception of Gandhiji, I fail to see any other prophet, all throughout history, who had meddled with that dirty game called politics. A politician must deal with any eventuality, with persuasion and sweet reasonableness if possible, with enforced legislation and with the help of the police and the military forces, if necessary. When a famous journalist once told Mahatmaji that his religion was politics, Gandhiji is said to have retorted: "My politics is religion." So there is something novel in Gandhiji, different from Socrates in the West, and Buddha and Christ in the East. No, there are no two ways about truth.

Amery: In other words, what is black is black and what is white is white. Militarism is met by militarism and non-violence by non-violence. Logic is met by logic, reason is met by reason, and passion by passion. Philosophers and professors can meet only on the plane of logic and intuition. A husband and wife can meet, in moments of love, only on the plane of love, in moments of reason only on the plane of reason, in moments of passion only on the plane of passion. Just imagine those dreamers who think that non-violence—however organized be the non-cooperation or civil resistance movement—can shatter the black hearts of the white sahibs in Whitehall, London. No, friends, Britain could be beaten only with her own weapons. Let us look at history—for history they say is a great guide and preacher on human life,—and learn that the philosophy and Self-realization are reserved but for a thoughtful few,

who have a different law of, and a different attitude towards, life, from those other 999 out of a thousand citizens of a State, whose security, in time of war and peace, is safeguarded by the machinery of the State organization. There is no other way. Yes, as Subhas has rightly said, there are no two ways about truth.

TRUTH, LOVE AND BEAUTY

They continued their heated discussions for nearly two hours. Then the tea was served. There was wonderful music played from Beethoven, Bach, Schubert, Rossini and Chopin. Some of the young boys and girls then began to dance in the halls where the party was held. After the Fascist and Nazi national songs were over, some of the Indian students with their German and Austrian girl friends sang "Bande Mataram".

Das kept silent for a long time, listening and thinking, until those two girls from the ammunition factory went up and shook him saying: "Eh! Wake up. Come and dance with us". But Bharat Mata Das then became stern and serious. Then some youngsters, invited to the party, began to show all sorts of amusing and comic jerks until Das was placed in a different mood. Then they began to tease him and fire questions at him which, at least to maintain his honour, Das was bound to answer.

The girl who once drove Mr. Das, Rao and the German student, and sang Lilley Marlen, full of American wit and British humour, combined with that German depth of thought, said: Now, boys and girls listen! Our friend over there (pointing towards Das) is a musician, philosopher and a poet. He has told me many a time that God is Love, Truth and Beauty. Now, let him tell us, or better teach us, what is Love, Truth and Beauty. Come along, Das, answer this public query, face this public challenge. Do you, boys and girls, want to know the answer to this highly metaphysical question?

All the young boys and girls present there shouted in chorus: Yes, we want to know the answer. We want Mr. Das to answer it.

Das: Well look here boys, look here girls, we are here for a grand send-off party, and do you want me to indulge in these ontological abstractions?

All the youngsters shouted again: Yes we do. We want the metaphysical speculations now; right now, in the midst of war and violence, right on the eve of Subhas Bose's departure to Russia. These fundamental questions on human life must be inquired into and discussed at all times and in all places. So Buddha said that

religious truths must be sought after and lived at all times, both in time of crisis and when all things run smoothly, both in youth and when decrepitude draws in.

Das : If you could digest what I have to say regarding Truth, Love, and Beauty, then, listen.. Here it is. Take it if you can.

I don't know where to begin. Let me begin with the Cartesian '*Coigio, ergo sum*' ? Subjective consciousness is the centre of reference of all human knowledge. Even the physical world of the suns and moons, of the stars and planets, of men and animals, all extra-mental world, exist only in relation to the thinking subject. Human consciousness, at its various levels, is the root of all human knowledge. I want to have that fixed in your mind, because only the subjective thought and self-consciousness are the supreme criteria for knowing the *ego* and *to-non-ego*, both the subjective and the objective cosmos. The consciousness of *ego* brings with it, or includes in it, the idea of being, of an entity. Entity is that which is. Being is different from becoming. The whole of cosmos is in a continuous state of becoming, *in continuo fieri*, as the ancients used to say. Everything is subject to change and this law of impermanency is true of even our so-called "eternal mountains and eternal love". But becoming there cannot be without Being behind. Or, as Kant argued, the phenomenal world cannot subsist without the *Neumenon* behind. There cannot be the shadow without the Substance, no appearance without Reality.

Now then, truth, beauty and love are but relations of concepts, at various levels of consciousness, within our mind, but of the same reality. We call a thing an entity in so far it exists. When its existence is perceived in relation to its perfection, order, harmony and unity, then we form the idea of beauty. Love is a yearning towards, and rest in, the object conceived as good and beautiful. But, mind you, I do not want to give you an academic analysis of these metaphysical concepts. One should experience and feel it for oneself. No amount of description or definition of love, beauty and truth, can ever make us loving, beautiful or truthful. It is a living experience which becomes a part and parcel of our being. The most profound human truths are to be experienced. It is like love between friends, between a boy and a girl, between parents and children, which is to be experienced rather than described. So the experience we gain by contemplating the summits of the Himalayas, the graceful beauty of the Alps or Kashmir, the poetry that springs within us by looking

at the sky at the daybreak or at the sunset, the tender and loving inspiration we feel by looking into the eyes of a child, are all derived from the living experience by the living man, of the living Truth, Beauty and Love emanating from them. They are essentially and fundamentally things of the spirit, a deep and vivid experience. It cannot be taught nor described by other men or books, whether sacred or profane. It does not fall within the purview of time and space. So when the angel of Death comes and knocks at our door, and says : "Make ready to leave this earth, for time is no more for you," we can reply : "well, my friend, Death, I have not lived in time but always in Eternity, whose infinite thrill I have been experiencing, all throughout my life, manifested in Love Truth and Beauty." In this way we overcome time in Eternity, death in Life, evil in Good. There is no other way to Immortality.

Rao : You Bharat, either make it short or switch over your talks on to more relevant topics that will fit in with the occasion.

The German girl : What ? Do you want Mr. Das to speak on the Japanese armaments or on our Luftwaffe ? They are of transitory importance, whereas what Mr. Das is now saying is of eternal significance. For it seems to me that every man and woman, when, through some shock or other, through some calamity or other—because by merry-making and dancing parties and amusements alone we are never brought back to the deeper truths about Man—Nature and Humanity are unveiled to one's own self, then one sees oneself, as if in a mirror, one's own form, *swarupa*, as the Vedas call it. By talks and discussions on politics and kindred subjects, debating on the topics of the moment, we never reach the core of Reality, nor we are led to the understanding of our own selves, without which nothing worthwhile is ever achieved in this world. So, my dear Das, you go ahead with your subject and don't care two pence for what Mr. Rao says to you. You boys and girls, don't you agree ?

"Yes, Das, go ahead", they shouted in chorus.

Das : From the things seen we ascend to the unseen world, and from the temporal and transient beings, as if through a ladder, we climb beyond them, and reach and glimpse into things celestial and eternal. The door to that infinite vision and ineffable experience may remain closed for a considerably long time. But once its relish and beauty are experienced, you will never forget it, and it will be for you a source of perennial inspiration and enlightenment. O blessed vision, which Plotinus had more than three times,

and which gave him that higher philosophy of the West. All the divine philosophers, poets and prophets have had its vision. Some call it the Supreme Reality, God, others the Eternal Substance, others Eternal Love. But, it is nothing but the vivid and living experience granted to a few mortals, treading their weary way along this vale of sighs, by the immortal light of the Eternal God, who is within the heart of man, who is in the universe, whose shade and shadow is the entire cosmos. In this infinity and eternity, you and I, Hitlers and Boses, Japans and Indias, are but specks and moats, and nothing more. The ecstatic thrill of this experience comes from Reality, the Supreme Reality beyond all relative realities, the Supreme God above all gods, the Lord of all lords, whom, by His gracious light, we see, we adore. Das then sang the following Vedic hymn in Tagore's tune :

*Tamishvaranam paramam maheshvaram,
 Tam devatanam paramancha daivatam
 Patim patinam paramam parastad
 Vidama devam bhuvanesamidhyam.
 Na tasya karyam karananja vidyathe,
 Na tatsamaschabhydikascha drusyate,
 Parasya shaktirvividhaiva srutyate,
 Swabhaviki jnana balakriyacha.
 Na tasya kaschit patirasti loke
 Na veshita naiva cha tasya lingam
 Sa karanam karanadhipatipo
 Na chasya kashit ganita na chadhipa.*

A lady who was seated with a fur coat on, at the corner, who did not speak a word until then, got up and said : O what language is that. It sounds sweet. But I do not understand a word of it. The tune is wonderful. Please tell me what's it ?

The German girl : Come along, Das, do translate these beautiful Sanskrit verses for that lady over there, and for those others who do not understand the classical language of India.

Das : The music of my song is from Rabindranath Tagore, and the words are the verses 7, 8 and 9 of the sixth chapter of the Svetasvatropanishad. Now let me translate them freely ?

Him who is the great Lord of lords,
 Sovereign God of gods, great, supreme,
 The Supreme among the masters, greater than the greatest,
 Him we know, the adorable Lord of this universe.
 Neither body He has nor endowed is He with senses,

None equal to Him is found, none superior.
 His manifold powers are sung in sundry ways.
 Natural unto Him are deeds of wisdom, deeds of strength.
 No master He has in the universe, nor a guide,
 Nor an image equal to Him is seen.
 He is the Cause of all, the Prime Cause, Cause of causes all.
 He has neither a progenitor, nor a lord anywhere.

The lady from the corner : How wonderful ! I fully agree with every word uttered by Mr. Das. I also feel that we should not spend time on mere trifles. I have noticed that often discussions on politics and high strategy are escapades from the realities of life, as a youth, in his or her loneliness, kills time and energy by philandering or flirting. But, some day or other, we shall have to face these fundamental problems of human life, nor we can put them off indefinitely. Like the shadow of death, so the call to enter into ourselves and to explore the infinite depths of the subjective consciousness continues unabated, impelling our conscience and our minds to consider this supreme affair of human existence, and realize ourselves, without which nothing is of any use.

Dr. Foster : So Jesus said : "what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, but suffereth the loss of his own soul ?"

Selvaggiani from Milan : O how wonderfully true !

From 8 P. M. supper was served, and the table talks between Subhas and his friends; and also of the members of the party among themselves, were the most interesting.

On being asked by an academician, a very speculative mind, on the nature of substance and subsistence, Subhas replied : Why do you ask me about these ontological abstractions ? I see untold misery in my country, there, here, everywhere. I see walking skeletons, mothers with their hungry children on their shoulders, who can neither throw away their children into the streets or rivers, and thus let them die,—because their maternal love constrains them to fondle them,—nor can they find the wherewithall to feed them. Like the pelican of old, they feed their young ones opening their breasts, until they fall a prey to their weakness and die. I have seen and experienced human misery in all its nakedness, and my only philosophy is how to feed men and cloth them, and how to make them free in truth and justice ; but, mind you, in human truth and human justice alone. Please do not ask me, I request you, such subtle questions, because I am not clever enough, nor learned enough, to answer you such questions. I am just a humble man, a speck of consciousness

afloat like a moat in God's creation. I do not consider myself anything more than a drop in the infinity and eternity of this ocean of life. A mere reed I am, although a thinking reed.

Emmanuel Kant's saying, "Two things fill me with wonder and awe, the starry sky up above and the responsibility of man voiced through his conscience", returns to my mind with ever-renewed strength and insistence. Yes, during this short span of life granted to me by the grace of Heaven, I must continue to serve, and serve all the days of my life, the hungry and the naked god I see around me, the poor, lonely and the lost. For me there is no other religion, no philosophy greater than this.

Das : I fully endorse all that you say. That is the gospel of Vivekananda, the gospel of Ramakrishna, and all the prophets of modern India. If only that gospel could grow on the cultural heritage of not only India, but also of the ancient Greece, Rome and the historical Christianity, which, *par excellence*, is Catholicism, then we shall have the religion of humanity. I consider myself an heir to human Catholicism, and as such, I keep my eyes open to all civilizations, and my mind grows every day. New horizons I see, new songs I hear, new vistas are opened up before my spirit. My Roman Catholicism is the religion of Humanity. O how I wish that, the mightiest religious institution on this earth as is the Roman Catholic Church, be really catholic enough to embrace and grow upon the cultural heritage of every nation, of every people on this earth. You know my dear Subhas, how much I owe to the Catholic Church. I owe much to England too. I am indebted to many, and I can say in all truth with St. Paul that I am a debtor to Greeks and Romans, to the Church and the State, to Roman Catholicism and Indian Vedanta. I consider myself a debtor to all, so that I may serve all. Let my life extinguish itself in service, as a candle by burning !

Subhas : That attitude is the right one. Then, you will understand how Britain, against whom we have had many political quarrels, has contributed so much to the constitutional development of Democracy in the West, and how the Catholic religion has helped in bringing the heterogeneous forces under one supreme head. Then we begin to understand and appreciate the gifts of the western nations in many of our social and political struggles for the freedom and emancipation of the human spirit. O what a wonderful vision of the greatest ideal of one God and one Humanity ! One culture, one vision, one citizenship ! In this great Comity of Nations, all other

countries will be like different provinces, subordinated to a World Government, with a world ideal, which alone can save mankind from mutual slaughter and self-destructive political and revolutionary upheavals. God grant us wisdom to understand and live up to this grand world Ideal !

The talks and discussions, music and songs, dances and debates, continued to late hours.

Subhas bade good-bye to his friends who had come from far and near, some of whom had come from Italy.

Strangely enough, at the end of the party, Miss. Mira Sen said a beautiful prayer which all devotedly attended. That young Bengali girl, a student in Germany, said : O Lord of Heaven and Earth, inspirer and guide of human hearts, source of every bliss and enlightenment, the light that enlightenth every one who cometh unto this world, bless us all and make us free ! Let the voice of freedom resound in our hearts, and let us grow increasingly in the path of freedom, for which enable us to sacrifice everything. Where thy spirit reigns, O Lord, there breathes freedom. Make us free, make our country free, make the mankind free ! Make us free in truth, for truth is freedom, and thy word and thy inspiration are truth. Lead us all unto thy vineyard, and let there be but one fold and one shepherd ! Thy will be done on the earth for all eternity. *Om Tat Sat Om !*

Then the party dispersed, some bidding Subhas good-bye in tears of love and hope, wishing him success in his proposed three months visit to the Russian front, and the subsequent return to and struggle in Asia.

CHAPTER V

BEFORE THE SUBMARINE LEFT

Latif had come all the way from Italy to see Subhas Chandra off. So Das, Rao and Latif once more got together, before they separated one from the other, perhaps for ever.

Das, as if worried about something, turned to Latif and said : You know, Abdul, our existence in this world becomes full of significance only when we have relished the Supreme Reality. What am I ? What are you in this infinity of God's Universe ? You and I are here today, but we do not know what is in store for us tomorrow. How truly did Buddha say : "As birds go to their roosting-tree and then depart, so the meeting of beings inevitably ends in separation. As clouds, having come together, depart asunder again, such I consider the meeting and parting of living things. And since this world goes away, each one of us deceiving the other, it is not right to think anything thine own in a time of union which is but a dream".

Latif : As I breathe the beauties of Nature lavished on Italy, and as I enjoy the Platonic dialogues every day, I say to myself : 'O God, now, take me out of this world and transplant me where you will'. You know, my dear Das, now I have conquered the fear of death, and every other fear, because wherever I am, now I feel that I am always in His hands. He is our Supreme God, the Lord and Governor of human hearts, in this earth, in this universe.

As they were conversing together in the parlour, Subhas Chandra came in. He was very glad to meet Latif once again in Germany. Rao was sitting in a corner with his lighted Player's Medium cigarette in his mouth. There were five more intimate associates of Subhas in the room that evening.

SOLILOQUIES

Subhas group had a free hand in organizing the "Zentrale Freies Indien" in Germany and the Gestapo had little control over them, because Subhas remained a free man wherever he went. He was the symbol of Indian freedom wherever he had been. He brought honour and dignity to the country of his birth and love from all the people

he moved with. Subhas was intrepid, discarded dangers, risked everything, and above all, he had a living faith in the living God of his heart.

When Subhas began to speak on the freedom and aspirations of his distant Motherland, he became visibly moved. He then seemed to have been saying within himself, singing in soliloquies :

Twenty four hours more, O great Germany, and I w'll leave
your shores,

And back to you I come, O my distant Motherland, to heal your
sores,

To free your chains, to set you free, completly, eternally free,

And make all your children see the glorious day of the
redeeming grace.

That wonderland stretching from Cape Comorin in the South,

To the Himalayas in the North, Burma, Afghanistan on
either side,

That is the land of my dreams, my heart's paradise.

O my India, my love, to whom I owe my all,

Make me worthy of thy great immortal soul.

O late me come back to your bosom and rest,

There let me fight, there let me die athirst

Of thy glory and grace. O let me land again

On thy sacred shores. Among thy children let me reach again !

God of love and truth, keep watch over my distant love,

Under thy shield hold her fast ; from thy grasp let she
never part !

God of rishis, saints and seers, make my country free.

Let all her children hold their heads erect and let them see

Th'infinity and eternity of thy divine majesty !

Make all her races one, undivided, a nation great.

Let Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Parsees, Sikhs, Jains unite,

In one, eternal, happy, free and progressive Fatherland.

Grant, Father, grant, freedom, light and joy to us all !

At thy behest I go to take charge of thy men over there.

Lead, lead me through, on and on, until I could see where

Thy gracious hand will take us to. O Father, grant

Us reach thy boarderland, thy own blessed land !

Jaidev, make India free, and let all her children say :

'JAI HIND' from their hearts, illumined by thy divine ray.

Let thy Truth reign supreme, *satyameva jaiyate* !

Om ! Brahma Satyam, Jagam mithya, atmo daiviva napara,

Hari Om !

CONFIDENTIAL TALKS

After saying this prayer Subhas sat on the chair and began to say to Das : Tomorrow you know the submarine will leave from Bordeaux. I have full confidence that I will reach Japan and there embark upon this new ordeal. If fall I should, I will fall fighting like a hero. Now there is no retracing my steps.

Then, turning to his friends, Subhas said : In God's hands we are. He alone knows who will survive or who will fall. But those of you who survive, if Subhas fall in the battlefield, go and say to my countrymen that Subhas Chandra Bose did not forfeit his sacred trust, but died heroically in serving God and his Motherland.

My India, my Bengal, my Calcutta, O how I long to see you once again ! But I will enter there only as a free man, setting my feet in a free land. O divine triangular land, when shall I see you again, you for whom I have given up love, family, relations, whose servant and soldier I have become for the rest of my life. India inspire me. India bless me. India hold me, enfold and embrace me in your arms !

Then Subhas said : Up boys ! let's sing. (All then got up and in chorus began) :

Sons and daughters of Hindustan,
The day is come. Awake ! Arise !
Form ye legions, form ye battalions !
O God's wonderland, flower, blossom !
The sword in the scabbard will never return
Until the last foe is smashed, until we sing,
That eternal song of freedom in our land,
God's eternal garden, ever fresh, young and grand.
Today we swear befor Almighty God,
That hands that soiled His flower-garden,
Will all be brought to book,
Their villiany we shall no more brook.
Come ye boys, come ye girls of Bharat land,
Holyland of all, Pakistan for all,
Christianstan for all, and Sikhistan for all
O Mother embracing all races, creeds all !

Das : Subhas, if ever you reach Bengal, the king of India you will become. Then will your name go down in Indian history as THE HERO OF HINDUSTAN. That province will lead India's other provinces, and the provinces will lead the Indian States.

India's geographical and historic unity, her cultural and spiritual unifying thread will now be strengthened by an organic unity, where, all the religious taboos will be removed, when the steel walls of the caste system will be broken, when there will be inter-relations of social, economic and political life among all our countrymen.

SOCIALIST GOSPEL

Subhas : We will give to our country, above all, friendliness, comradeship and equality between men and women, between men of different religious persuasions, and labour alone will be the sole standard for judging who is to live and who is not. Heredity, religious profession etc. will not decide one's career. No birth, no caste, no creed, shall ever be sufficient ground for any one to ascend to power, glory or leadership. What is required is only the intrinsic worth of the man and his capacity to do, to brave, to dare. Initiative, enterprise, and the adventurous spirit of our youth of either sex will be fostered. When our womenfolk are raised, and to them is given back that sense of equality and comradeship, as it now exists in the Western countries, as it once existed in ancient India, then we have made strides in the social progress of our country. Let our Indian *sarees* get the freedom of the western frock, and let there be the gospel of love, not in its crude and vulgar form, but in its idealist and romantic poetry. In India there is more child-bearing, but less romantic love. In the west there is less child-bearing, but more of romanticism in love. From our own ancient past, and from the history of these Western nations we can learn, transplant and cultivate the gift of love, the sense of equality and comradeship between man and woman. This was the dream of Gurudev, Rabindranath Tagore, who once doubted my mission, but now blesses me and my adventure. After my welcome address at the opening of Mahajati Sadan, Gurudev blessed and told me : India expects much from you. His blessings must not run in vain and I must not be disloyal to my vocation. My brother Sarat Chandra Bose was also there. He must fulfil my vocation if, fall.

Miss. Sen began : (Waltz's Blue Danube tune)

Right note have you struck, you, my friend.

Let our womenfolk be free : let them sing the song of love,

O make them free, make them great.

The spring flowers will come up with bloom and cheer,
 India's honour is restored by setting her womenfolk free,
 O let them grow, grow to heaven's heights.
 Man-woman, woman-man, th'eternal problem for all mankind.
 Man God, God man, the root of every bliss, every joy of
 every kind.

Thither, let's soar my friends !
 Behold in this great ancient land,
 Mountains rapt in meditation,
 The earth in all her sacredness,
 And everything grows luxuriant and grand.
 Go ye, valiant sons of India, to set your Mother free.
 Emancipate your womenfolk, give them back their smile.
 Go forward, India's blooming youth,
 Let your India be this earth,
 Let your Motherland extend her arms
 To all mankind.
 Hail, hail, blue Indian skies,
 We will free you from all your ties,
 Indians, brave, dare, arise.

After this, there came two young girls of about ten, one an Indian and the other a German blond, who garlanded Subhas. The garlanding of Subhas Chandra was a ceremony performed with Indian music, with musical accompaniments. The beauty consisted in this that Indian music and the instruments were truly wedded to the western music and western air. "This," said Subhas Chandra, "should be another reform we have to make in India. Not only the Military, but also the man-in-the-street should be attuned to the rhapsody of the western music, of the happy blending of both Eastern and Western music."

Miss. Sen : And also the boys and girls, men and women, husbands and wives in India should live in the house as comrades and friends, walk in the streets holding hand in hand, and be equals and comrades everywhere, so that that infernal curse of the veil and *purdha* of women, and a hundred other social ills affecting Indian womenfolk, and their general living conditions, may be removed by sheer force of legislation. If Gandhiji is unfit for that task let him go to preach Self realization to those willing to hear him. Let then many hundreds Mustafa Kemal Pashias (Attaturks) rain down in India, and do what is needed to maintain India's honour, her prestige and progress.

Subhas : These are the ideals which unfold themselves slowly, ever-alive, in our minds, and we will not shrink back. All the genuine nationalist leaders in India think in these terms. There is a substantial agreement between us all. Pandit Nehru and I have met and discussed on these problems and we have always agreed on these issues.

Afterwards they all went to dine together. The table talks were very interesting in which they outlined the Socialist economy to be introduced in a free India, and the means to strengthen and expand the Leftist forces in all the provinces, specially in Bengal.

Subhas : Yes, I fully agree, that we should train our people to think and act socialistically. The entire Socialist literature should be made available to the Indian masses in their vernaculars and in Hindustani, the national language of India. But, scientific and practical Socialism is very much different from that vague and utopian Socialism, far more different than is Chemistry from Alchemy or Astronomy from Astrology. But we will raise our country to the Socialist gospel, not necessarily in its Christian form, as in Tobt or Stocker, but in its international and human form as in Marx, Engels, Lassale and others, today applied in Germany according to the German genius and traditions, suited to their socio-economical needs, today applied in Russia in a way that best suits them, today in Mexico, and ever growingly in England, Yugoslavia and many other countries of the West. Tomorrow it is to be applied in our own country in a way congenial to our character, traditions, and compatible with maximum amount of individual freedom of our people. But we will fight on to free our country from the foreign bondage first, and then we will fight the domestic foes, and establish a free, united, prosperous and a most advanced and progressive Republic in the world.

Eistein (one of Hitler's personal friends invited to dinner) : I would add one more item in the topics of our discussion. That is the resurrection of the cultural and political fraternization of all the peoples of the Aryan race. All the Indo-Germanic races should form one great Forward Block and, I assure you, the coalition of the Anglo-Saxon plutocracy shall not be able to disturb the peace of this world once again. Russia will join us, because she knows that Britain has no future, unless she voluntarily gives up her empire, repent of her past follies, and secure commercial advantages with India and other countries, but entirely on a free basis. Then, and then only, Britian can prosper.

When I was last in India I toured about in many provinces. All the anthropological features suggest that the old blood ties that existed between the peoples of the Aryan race, before they branched off into India, Greece, Scandinavia and Germany, are still seen there. Merciless heat of the Indian sun has discoloured their skin. But for the rest, the hair, the lips, the limbs, the configuration of the skull, the general psychology and the physiological affinity are the same between the Indians and the Germans. In Bengal and in the Punjab I studied many typical Indians and I felt the kinship, the blood-relationship that still exists between India as a whole, and the rest of the Aryan race. That there is no pure Aryan race left is an established fact. Hence to speak of the purity of the Aryan blood is the "Myth of the twentieth century" as Rosenberg called it. O I would bring these two peoples nearer once again.

Das : Many narrow-minded people outside would think that this close friendship between our two countries would weaken the link with other countries. But that is not true. There is no question of displacing the friendship with Britain or France by the close blood-spirit-ties you are proposing, and the best among us are contemplating to achieve. We want a great comity of nations, were all the nations of the earth will be inter-linked and closely knit, co-operating and self-sacrificing for each other, for the maintenance of world peace and world prosperity. That is the one world, one humanity, one citizenship gospel we are dreaming about. Don't you agree with me Subhas ?

Subhas : You know Bharat, that by this time you are my mouthpiece, as I am yours. There is such a spiritual affinity between us that there is identity of vision and judgements between Bharat and me in all the essentials, although we both maintain our different personalities. It is always wonderful to meet comrades in arms, comrades in battle, comrades in common adventures of thought and action. How wonderful !

John Amery : Now I am going to shout out an unpleasant truth. Hitler *may* be right in Germany, Mussolini in Italy. Subhas, Gandhi, and Nehru *are* right in India. But Churchill and my own father *are not* right in my country as far as India is concerned. The salvation of England is to be worked out by the Socialist forces. I expect there is going to be a crushing victory of the Labour Party in England during the next post-war election, which will take cognizance of all the forces that are at work in the world today and try to stem the suicidal policy of Churchill and Amery—that is my father—

and help England, my own dear Motherland, India and the world to walk along the path of freedom and progress.

The conversations and the table talks continued for a long time. Subhas was wonderfully calm, now and then smiling, but often absorbed in thought. He answered all questions freely and frankly.

THE PLANES FLEW AND THE SUBMARINE SANK

Strict military secret was maintained regarding the departure of Subhas from Germany. Nobody knew where the aeroplanes went, nor where the submarine from Bordeaux was destined for. Only Subhas Chandra knew the final destination of that risky and heroic journey. Three aeroplanes were seen flying about on that day in the Tiergarten area of Berlin, and bodyguards were accompanying Subhas.

A few of his friends and admirers thronged around him to see him off for the last time, as he was motoring down towards the airfield. Some exclaimed : Heil Subhas Bose ! Heil Subhas Bose !

Bhatat M. Das was too visibly moved at the scene, and just before Subhas got into the aeroplane, he said :

Go, go, servant, leader of India, NETAJI great,
 Into the battlefield and lead your battalions,
 March, march, great HERO OF HINDUSTAN, forward !
 We follow you, wherever you lead, led by the divine guide,
 Whether through the moorish den, through the stormy sea
 or mild,
 On to the path of freedom ! Eternal Freedom.

Subhas : You who remain here, you who follow me, whether I survive my mission or not, this is my last message. When you get back to India, and if I fall in fight, go and tell my people that Hindustan must rediscover her own soul, the spirit of her ancient past ; the eternal verities behind the *varnashrama Dharma*, and her mighty past. Let my India grow on the eternal wisdom and experience of her sages, truly wedded to the best cultural heritage of every civilization on this earth, eastern or western, ancient, medieval or modern. Let my India be the land where everyone will feel quite at home, where freedom will grow more and more, where every shackles will fall. Let my India rediscover her idealist roots, her poetry, her vivid and multiprismatic imagination. O let my country awake, let my Motherland arise, let my India grow !

India of the ancient Rishis and sages,
 Of the Vedas and Vedantas, of the Upanishads and Yogas,

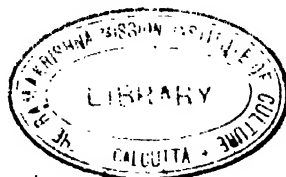
Land that welcomes every race, every creed,
 Every nation, every grace, awake, arise !
 You, my adored land, back to your bosom I return.
 This commandment from the Almighty I have received,
 I come, hasten to the fulfil my vow, my *dharma*
 Towards God and my Fatherland.
 Ye, friends who stand ashore, good-bye,
 Good-bye Das, Good-bye Latif, Rao, all,
 Untl we meet again, enfold, embrace anew,
 Perhaps underneath the sun, perhaps in the great Unknown.
 Subhas Chandra has no other aim in life,
 But to win freedom and end this strife,
 Open the portals of immortality to my Motherland ;
 And make her on this earth a blessed land.
 So, boys, girls, friends, comrades, let's march,
 March to Delhi and enthrone there the goddess of freedom,
 Hoist the Congress tricolour, and in a choir we then sing :

JAI HIND

The sky was clear. The protecting aeroplanes were flying overhead. The sun was slowly setting behind the blue waters. Sea gulls and sky larks were seen flying far off. The admirers and friends of Subhas were still deeply moved, some were shedding tears, as the submarine sank and, as they waved their hands, the U-boat disappeared from their sight.

The chivalrous leadership and the heroic struggles of this great son of India in Asia are only too well known among our people. The romance and heroism of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, the chivalry and idealism of the great I. N. A., and its intrepid leader and hero, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, will not fade away from the pages of Indian history, from that great history of the struggle for freedom, unity and progress of India, our eternal and immortal Motherland.

E N D



INDEX

- Abelard, 128
 Abdul Kalam Latif, 31
 Abruzzi, 51
 Advaitam, 56, 90
 Afghanistan, 145
 Africa, 69
 Ahimsa, 66
 Ajit Singh, 134
 Alchemy, 149
 Allaha, 74
 Al Halaj, 95
 Allies, 52
 Alps Mts., 138
 Amburg, 53
 America, 34, 35, 68, 121
 American wit, 173
 Amery John, 134, 136
 Amery Leopold, 134, 150
 Andrews, C. F., 24
 Angels, 27, 55
 Angiolina, 29, 31, 36, 44, 45, 133
 Anglo-Saxon 83, 99, 120, 149
 Anti-Semitism, 135
 Apennines, 52
 April Fool's Day, 125
 Aquinas Thomas St., 48
 Arezzo, 4
 Aristotle, 23, 124
 Aruna Asaf Ali, 98
 Aryan Religions, 74
 Arya Samaj, 85
 Aryan Blood, 150
 Aryan Monism, 95
 Aryan Races, 42, 149, 150
 Asia, 32, 42, 69, 143
 Asiatic, 16
 Asoka, 19, 113
 Astronomy, 149
 Astrology, 149
 Atlantic Charter, 122
 Atma Bhoda, 87, 96
 Attaturk, 148
 Augustine, St. 25, 72, 105
 Augustus Ceasar, 12
 Aurobindo Ghose, 72
 Austria, 114
 Austrian, 137
 Avverroes, 48
 Avvicenna, 48
 Axis, 3, 33, 35

 Babylonia, 117
 Bach, 137
 Badarayana's Sutras, 91
 Bande Mataram, 137
 Barisal, 114
 Bavaria, 52
 Beethoven, 137
 Belgium, 42
 Behler, 8—13
 Benares, 71
 Benedictus Dominus, 8
 Bengal, 24, 146, 148, 149
 Benois Henry, 22
 Berchtesgaden, 38, 52, 53, 61, 77, 78
 Berlin, 53, 67, 79, 125
 Berlin University, 126, 136
 Bernard of Clairveux, St. 105
 Bernini, 109, 110
 Bersaglieri, 2, 109
 Bhagavad Gita, 32, 133
 Bhakti Yoga, 103
 Bharat Varsha, 20, 117
 Bible, 5
 Bismarck, 67
 Blue Danube, 147
 Bolschevic, 34
 Bordeaux, 24, 146, 151
 Bose Subhas Chandra, *passim*
 Bosism, 133
 Brahman, 6, 10
 Brahmacharya, 37, 38, 39, 40, 47, 125, 131
 Brahmacharin, 38
 Brahmo Samaj, 85
 Brahmadevya, 20
 Breitinger, 78
 Brihadaranayaka Upanishad, 71
 Britain, 150
 Britishers, 70
 British Humour, 137
 British Lion, 13
 British War Cabinet, 135
 Buddha, 5, 19, 53, 66, 74, 97, 103, 137, 141
 Buddhism, 104
 Buddhists, 92
 Burma, 145

 Caesar, 66, 133
 Calvary, 62
 Calcutta, 62, 125, 146
 Calcutta University, 108
 Canonical marriage, 51
 Cape Comerin, 145
 Capitalism, 68
 Carducci, 36
 Carducci Anna, 18
 Carlotti Mario, 40
 Carthesian Cogito ergo sum, 115, 138
 Caste System, 101
 Castalgandolof, 13
 Castel Sant Angelo, 28
 Catacombs, 1, 48
 Catholic, 31
 Catholicism, 1, 48
 Catholic Church, 133, 134
 Catholic Literature, 58
 Catholic Missionaries, 70
 Catholic Religion, 142
 Cavour, 41
 Chaitanya, 105
 Chancery, 119
 Chandogya Upanishad, 90
 Chicago, 82
 Charka-Khadi, 24
 Chemistry, 149
 China, 69, 117
 Chinese, 99, 101
 Chopin, 137
 Christianity, 69, 70, 96, 97, 103
 Christians, 57, 145
 Christianstan, 146
 Christ Jesus, 62, 66, 103
 Church, 39, 58, 66, 70
 Churchill Winston, 65, 121, 122, 150
 Ciano Conte Galeazzo, 41, 43
 Cologne, 53

B

- Communal Award, 70
- Comus, 39
- Congress Indian National, 21, 22
- Coran, 5, 64, 71
- Corinthians, 65
- Cross Gospel of, 24, 54
- Crucifixion, 123
- Cupid, 39

- Dante Algieri, 36, 49, 94
- Das Bharat Mata, *passim*
- Das C, R., 35
- Delhi, 152
- Democracy, 2, 120, 142
- Descartes, 115
- Deussen Paul, 20, 78, 127
- Deutschland, 123, 129
- Dharma, 54, 118, 152
- Dhoti, 63
- Dian, 39
- Divide-et-impera, 69
- Divine Comedy, 36
- Dollar American, 122
- Duce, 41
- Dubois Abbe J. A. 82

- East, *passim*
- Egypt, 81, 117
- Ekagrachit mon, 38
- Ekanath, 105
- Elgin Road, 32
- Elohim, 74
- Encyclopedia Britannica, 33
- Engels, 67, 149
- England, 34, 149
- English, 54
- Europe, 40, 116
- European civilization, 84

- Fascism, 1, 120
- Florence, 36
- Forum Mussolini, 43
- Forum Romanum, 1
- Forward Block, 21, 22, 32, 67, 126, 150
- Foster, 141
- Fracassini Signor, 135
- France, 42, 114
- Francis of Assisi, 105, 110
- Frascati, 13
- French soil, 30
- Führer, 34, 39, 60, 112

- Gandhiji, *passim*
- Gandhism, 133
- Gartibaldi, 41
- Gentile Giovanni Senator, 11, 43
- Germany, 1, 17, 20, 21, 22, 34, 35, 40, 53, 112, 121, 145
- Gesund Brunnen, 109
- Gestapo, 144
- Gibbons Card, 66
- Gita, 34, 53, 135
- Giulietti Pierina, 18, 21
- Göbbels, Dr., 8, 114
- God, *passim*
- Golden Age, 117
- Gondo Col., 16, 17
- Göing, 60
- Gospel of St. John, 10
- Gospels Christian, 5

- Goethe, 20
- Gran Sasso, 51, 52
- Greece, 23, 42, 64, 81, 142
- Gurudev, 147

- Hardwick, 86
- Hari Om, 145
- Hata Yoga, 103
- Heilers, 58
- Heloise, 128
- Hero of Hindustan, 132, 146, 151
- Heterae, 125
- Himalayan Error, 33
- Himalayas, 78, 118, 145
- Hindenburg, 134
- Hindus, 17, 57, 84, 145
- Hindustan, 19, 20, 40, 56, 146
- Hindustani, 149
- Hindu-Moslem Tension, 69
- Hitler, 19, 20, 40, 56, 146
- Holland, 42
- Homer, 117
- Homo Sapiens, 80, 122
- Huns, 117

- "I AM", 37, 85, 95, 98, 99
- Ibnu' L-Farid, 49
- India, *passim*
- Indo-Aryans, 13
- Indo-European languages, 10
- Indo-Germanic races, 149
- Indian Art, 19
- Indian Civil Service, 70
- Indian National Army, 34, 60, 119, 134
- Industry, 100
- Isaias, 62
- Islam, 48, 103
- Italy, 1, 22, 31, 112, 122, 133, 134, 144
- Italian Art, 36
- Italian Unity, 69

- Jai Hind, 145, 152
- Jains, 145
- Jainism, 79
- Janagana mana, 25
- Japan, 1, 11, 34, 68, 122, 146
- Japanese, 99
- Japanese Ambassador, 16
- Jerusalem, 71
- Jesus, 53, 66, 67, 74, 76, 77, 97, 104, 135
- Jews, 122
- Jewish mythology, 124
- Jewish prophecy, 1
- Jivatama, 92
- Jnana Yoga, 105
- Job, 124
- John of the Cross, 49, 72
- Jugoslavia, 149

- Kabir, 105
- Kagwa, 72
- Kali Yuga, 76
- Kalki, 98
- Kamala Nehru, 128
- Kant, 138, 142
- Kashmir, 138
- Kasturba Gandhi, 128
- Kataka, 87
- Kshatriya, 74

C

- Labour Party, 150
 Lahore, 5
 Lahore Resolution, 70
 Laotze, 74
 Lassale Ferdinand, 149
 Latif Abdul Kalam, 3, 27, 28, 29, 144
 Latin, 9, 49
 League Moslem, 70
 Leopardi, 36
 Lepicier, 24
 Lilley Marlen, 109, 110, 197
 Logos, 77
 Loisy Alfred, 99, 107
 Longfellow, 36
 Lucietti, 23
 Lucretius, 92
 Luftwaffe, 139
 Lupatelli Astorre, 42
 Luther, 11
 Lutherans, 78

 Machiavelli, 66
 Madras, 5
 Mahajati Sadan, 147
 Mahatma, 21, 24, 87, 55, 62, 64, 116, 128
 Magdalen, 124
 Maidan Calcutta, 37, 39, 40, 47, 130
 Malabar Christians, 69
 Marx Karl, 11, 67, 149
 Marxism, 133
 Max Müller, 11, 127
 Maya, 61, 86, 114, 116
 Maylapore, 5
 Mazzini, 41
 Mecca, 71
 Mein Kampf, 121
 Memorabilia Socratis, 61
 Messia, 62
 Mexico, 149
 Miccozzi, 1, 5, 7, 41
 Milton John, 39
 Minerva, 39
 Mirabai, 73
 Modernism Catholic, 107
 Mogols, 116
 Mohammed, 97, 103
 Monier Williams, 96, 127
 Morrison Herbert, 135
 Moslems, 17, 57, 145
 Mosques, 115
 Mukherjee Bankin, 114
 Mukherjee Syama Prasad, 101
 Mukundmala, 105
 Munich, 42
 Music, 100
 Myth of the Twentieth Century, 150
 Mysticism, 76

 Namarupa, 61
 Nanak Guru, 105
 Napoleon Buonaparte, 114, 125
 Narsaio, 105
 Nazism, 120
 Nazi Ideal, 123
 Nehru Pandit, 17, 21, 35, 67, 68, 128, 133
 136, passim
 Nehruism, 133
 Neti, 91
 Neo-Platonists, 77
 Netaji, 44, 151, 152

 New Delhi, 112
 New Order, 34, 123
 New Testament, 32, 33
 Newman John Henry, 27
 North America, 135
 Nordic Races, 20
 N. T. Bus, 7
 Nuremberg Nazi Congress, 8
 Nuncio Papal, 67

 Old Testament, 11
 OM, 117, 143
 Over-Soul, 30
 Ovid, 11
 Oxford University, 63

 Pakistan, 56; 146
 Palazzo Venezia, 1, 7
 Paradiso, 37, 94
 Paramatma, 92
 Paris, 5, 125
 Parsoes, 57, 145
 Pascal, 80
 Patanjali, 89
 Patel, 21
 Paul St., 8, 65, 72, 132
 Pax Augustea, 12
 Pax Britannica, 124
 Pax Humana, 124
 Pearl Harbour, 121
 Peroni Birra, 112
 Persia, 81, 117
 Perugia, 36
 Piazza Fiume, 3
 Piazza Spagna, 6, 13, 26, 28, 31, 44, 50
 Pincio Mt., 1, 44
 Plaro, 39, 49, 53, 74, 110, 117
 Platonic Dialogues, 144
 Platonic Love, 44
 Plotinus, 49, 139
 Politics, 101
 Punjabi, 12
 Purdha, 148
 Pythagoras, 108

 Quit India, 121

 Rabindranath Tagore, 37, 53, 140
 Racial Discrimination, 135
 Radhakrishnan S., 98, 108
 Rajputana, 73
 Ramakrishna, 36, 62, 77, 84, 110
 Ramakrishna Mission, 85
 Ram Mohun Roy, 24, 37, 118
 Rani of Jhansi Regiment, 152
 Rao Sanjiva, 2, 18, 31
 Reformation, 66
 Reich, 113
 Renaissance, 66
 Republicanism, 22
 Reuters, 3
 Roman Hills, 9, 10
 Romanesque Cloister, 53
 Romain Rolland, 62, 66
 Rome, 71, 81, 117, 142
 Rome University, 48
 Roosevelt Franklin Deleno, 65
 Rosenberg, 8, 20, 150
 Rossini, 137
 Rumi Jallaludin, 5

D

Russia, 5, 34, 120, 137, 149
 Russian Front, 143
 Russian Military resources, 120
 Russo-American Coalition, 122
 Rhys Davids, 78, 128
 Ribbentrop Von, 60, 120
 Rig Veda, 83
 Rishis, 65, 84, 108, 151

Sabia, 108
 Sadhana, 84
 Samsara, 71, 102
 Sankara Acharya, 87, 90, 118
 Sanskrit, 10
 Santiniketan, 85
 Saraswati, 13, 77
 Sarat Chandra Bose, 147
 Sarees, 147
 Sarojini Naidu, 48
 Satya, 61
 Satyagraha, 33, 66
 Satchitananda, 118, 131
 Scandinavia, 150
 Schiller, 127
 Schiller Margaret Miss, 79
 Schubert, 137
 Schusschinig, 136
 Selvaggiani, 141
 Semetic, 74
 Sen Mira Miss, 143, 147
 Sermon on the Mount, 34
 Shadai Iqbal Mohammed, 7, 15, 25
 Siddharta, 20
 Sikhs, 57, 145
 Sikhistan, 146
 Smith Anthony, 24
 Smriti, 86, 103
 Socrates, 54, 66, 74, 108, 117
 Socialism, 67, 146
 Socialist Economy, 140
 Solomon, 39, 108
 Sophienstrasse, 113
 South America, 135
 Sruti, 86, 103
 S. S. Soldiers, 60, 119
 Sujiura, 16
 Summa Theologiae, 48
 Sunder Singh Sadu, 72
 Sunnayta, 92
 Swaraj, 56
 Swarupa, 139
 Swateswataropanisad, 141

Tabula Rasa, 116
 Tagore, R. 77, 79, 102, 147
 Tarsus, 65
 Tatwamasi, 21
 Telepathy, 26
 Theosophical Society, 85
 Theresa St., 49
 Tibetan, 19
 Tiergarten, 3, 126, 151

Tilak, 32, 35.
 Timaeus, 19
 Tivoli, 13
 Tobt, 149
 To-non-ego, 138
 Tolstoy Leo, 24, 72, 135
 Totalitarianism, 22
 Trappist monks, 9
 Tro Fontane, 8
 Trippuri Session, 33
 Trott Von, 119
 Tucci Giuseppe, 3, 66
 Tukaram, 105
 Tuscany, 4

Ultimate Reality, 85, 96, 97
 Unitarian, 78
 United Provinces, 5
 Upanishads, passim
 Utopia, 13

Varnashrama Dharma, 152
 Vatican City, 1
 Vedas, 89, 139, 152
 Vedanta, 82, 86, 89, 94, 96, 97, 98, 133, 142, 152
 Vedic Hymn, 140
 Venice, 36
 Versailles Treaty of, 22, 135
 Via Appia, 8
 Vico John Baptista, 66
 Vidya, 65
 Vienna University, 22
 Vienna Woods Tales From, 9
 Viharas, 115
 Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit Mrs., 48
 Villa D'Este, 13
 Virgil, 11
 Vishnuvite, 97
 Vitlore Emmanuele II, 1
 Vivekananda Swami, 23, 78, 142

Wagner Hellen, 125, 133
 Waltz, 9, 20
 Wardha Scheme, 136
 Webber, 65
 West, passim
 Whermachet, 34
 Whitehall, 70, 134, 136
 Wilson, 135
 World Government, 12, 143
 Wyclif, 11

Xenophon, 61

Yagnavalkya, 19
 Yoga, 11, 82, 86, 96, 97, 151

Zamindari, 68
 Zen Buddhism, 107
 Zentrale Freis Indien, 119, 144

